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SPIRITUALISM IN AMERICA.

By BENJAMIN COLEMAN.

V.

THE narrative of Mr. L., recording the marvellous manifestations of a WIFE to her HUSBAND, which I have given in a former number of the Magazine, created as I have found very great interest, and has been received with a degree of respectful attention, which I confess surprised me, inasmuch as the incidents embrace a mass of phenomena, which, taken as a whole, exceed in wonder anything of the kind that has yet been given to the world. Although I expressed my entire confidence in the integrity of the narrator and his facts, I fully expected they would have been seriously questioned, even by many who acknowledge the reality of spiritual appearances, and that of course the general reader, and especially the members of the press for the most part, who know nothing of the subject, would treat them as the greatest delusion of any of those which have been seriously endorsed by the advocates of this great truth. I have, however, been agreeably disappointed in finding that that portion of the press, which has given extracts from my paper, has done so without offensive comments, and that the *Star and Dial* in reviewing the general character of my American notes did it in a tone quite unexceptionable, and thereby led to a deeply interesting discussion, published in the columns of that paper. I am told that the editor was obliged to bring it to a close, only on account of the overwhelming number of letters, extending I believe to several hundreds, that were addressed to him; a fact which in itself proves the wide-spread interest with which the subject is regarded. Indeed, some of the most popular writers of the day are now familiarising the minds of their readers with the marvellous, by introducing stories of spiritual manifestations into their journals, almost as wonderful as any that I have ventured to record. Take for instance "Mr. H.'s own Narrative," which appeared recently in Mr. Charles Dickens's popular journal of *All the Year Round*.

It is gravely introduced by Mr. Dickens to his readers as "A Remarkable Narrative," which he had received from "a real existing person, and a responsible gentleman," as if he had never before had a remarkable and well-attested ghost story from a responsible source. I may here state for the satisfaction of the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, that I have since made the acquaintance of the gentleman who wrote the narrative, and have had it corroborated from his own lips, with some additional particulars strange as any he has published. It is therefore a veritable story, told by "a responsible gentleman," and not, as might have been suspected from the way in which Mr. Dickens has been wont to treat the subject, a story got up to raise a laugh, at the credulity of some of his literary compeers, who received long ago the light which I hope is now beginning to dawn upon himself.

I mentioned when introducing Mr. L.'s experiences, that Dr. J. F. Gray, one of the most respectable physicians of New York, had first brought the facts to the notice of the members of the spiritual conference of that city, and that he gave very good reasons for believing that they were genuine. I have now the satisfaction of introducing to my readers a letter, which I have just received from Dr. Gray, corroborative of that statement, and one also from my friend Mr. L., enclosing a full account of his further experiences, which it will be seen are of a very extraordinary and deeply interesting character.

The cards referred to and which are in my possession, it must be understood, *are written upon by the spirits without human agency*, and therefore, the writing is not done, as we are accustomed to see it, through the hand of the medium. The following is Dr. Gray's letter:—

"New York, Sept. 30th, 1861.

"Dear Sir,—As our friend Mr. L. is not yet ready to exemplify his wonderful experience by attaching his name to the record he sends to you for publication, it seems to become my duty to make the lack of his name good by testifying to the accuracy and credibility of his statements. Mr. L. is by no means an exaggerative man, as you doubtless found in your close acquaintance with him during your visit to our city. Though quick to feel and perceive, he is slow in making deductions from occurrences around him; he is calm and amiable in deportment, deliberate and intrepid in action when his conclusion is attained, and not at all an enthusiast or poet, or reformer of other men's errors and vices. In this great topic of our investigations, he has gathered and registered his facts with calm precision; in no instance within my knowledge has he drawn an inference except on the straightest line and compulsion of his fact. He colours nothing by any, the least, over statement;

he omits nothing of imaginable scientific value. His verbal statements to me, and to others in my presence, correspond fully with the written report he has drawn from his diary, for your use. Besides, his general character for veracity and probity, Mr. L. is a competent witness to the important facts he narrates, because he is not in any degree subject to the illusions and hallucinations which may be supposed to attach to the trance or exstastic constitution. I have known him from his very early manhood and am his medical adviser, and I can safely aver that he is less liable to be disturbed by the agitation of others in his society, or misled by errors of his own organs of sense, than almost any man of my large circle of patients and acquaintance. I likewise knew his late wife (Estelle) from her early childhood, when I became her physician, and I can confirm her husband's averments as to the moral and mental indications of identity contained in the communications purporting to come from her to him, and to hers of her relatives and friends. Miss Fox, the medium in whose presence Mr. L. receives these grand and useful demonstrations of spirit-presence and power, has been intimately known to my wife and me from the time she was a very young girl, that is to say, from 1850 to this date. At that early day in the story of the manifestations, she was frequently a visitor in my family, and then, through that child alone, without the possibility of trick from collusion with others, or I may truly add, of imposture of any kind, all the various phenomena recorded by Mr. L., except the reproduction of visible human forms were witnessed by Mrs. Gray and myself and many other relatives and friends of our family. Among these I may mention, as present, attentive, and very able observers, the late Dr. Gerald Hall, my brother-in-law, and Dr. Warner, my son-in-law. Miss Fox is a young lady of good education, and of an entirely blameless life and character. Her deportment is unassuming, amiable, void of all artifice or affectation. From her lips my wife and I have received the same narrations as to the size, colour and elements of the lights exhibited, and as to the action and other characteristics of the beautiful apparition of Estelle, as those set forth before, and now forwarded to you by Mr. L. To this brief statement concerning the two principal witnesses and my competency in some degree to confirm their testimony, I may add, that a few years before this new phase of spirit phenomena occurred in Western New York (1848) I had conducted a careful series of experiments in Mesmerism, and had attained instructive and highly useful results respecting the trance state, clairvoyance, somnambulism, mesmerism, and physical and psychical *rapport*. In these experiments I was assisted by Dr. Hull and a few other learned and influential men, *each one of whom afterwards became a Spiritualist.*

From this preparation in my own experience, after having carefully inspected the records of my dear friend L.'s intercourse with spirits (of the very first part of which my wife and I were personal witnesses) I can safely and truly affirm that the whole statement he publishes is worthy of credit and, in my belief, most accurate.

"B. Coleman, Esq.,
"London."

"Faithfully your friend,
"JOHN F. GRAY."

The further narrative of Mr. L. will be best given in his own words, as follows:—

"New York, Oct. 1st, 1861.

"My dear Sir,—I am in receipt of your letter of the 5th ult., and, in accordance with your request, I enclose herewith a memorandum of some of my further experience. To bring the facts before you simply as facts, and not as theories, I have made extracts from my diary, and should you desire to give publicity to any of them, you can make your own selections. You may depend upon their entire reliability. They were recorded as they occurred, and are without exaggeration or coloring. I feel some diffidence in presenting such statements even to you, being myself astounded at my own experience. If then to you they may seem marvellous, how will they be looked upon by those without knowledge but as the ravings of a madman—or as the wild vagaries of delusion. It is difficult to convince the world of facts so contrary to general experience, and it is well not to accept them on insufficient evidence. This has been my rule of action from the commencement of these manifestations, and but for their gradual development, step by step, I could never have been prepared for such results. The receptive quality of the human mind is necessarily limited to, and dependent upon, this preparatory process: and the wisdom of our Creator in no way more strikingly manifests itself, than in this principle of adaptation—and in rendering our condition such, that we reject even great truths, until the soil has been first prepared to give them root. We become familiar to-day, with what yesterday we could not realize; and I look back now to my first experiences, which at the time seemed so marvellous, and regard them as but the very lowest rounds of the ladder which has been leading me towards the *Divine Light*. From the glimpses I have had of the spirit-world and its beauties, I am forced to the conviction that in our earth-life, we have little conception of the higher destiny which awaits us, in the perpetual and eternally progressive elevation of the human soul after it shall have shaken off its shackles of flesh. I hope before the winter passes, when the electrical conditions of the atmosphere become favourable, to be able to give you corroborative evidence beyond my own, having been promised

hat a circle of four, shall witness and bear testimony to the
 ruth of these developments. My sister has been designated as
 ne who can witness them without a disturbing influence. I
 and you herewith ten cards written by spirit-hands, which I know
 annot fail to interest you and your friends, with a memorandum
 f those which you are at liberty to keep if you desire. The
 thers I will thank you to return after you have made such use
 'them as you may think proper. The one written in ink will
 o doubt be looked upon with interest. It was done with an
 rdinary steel pen, which, with a glass inkstand and the card,
 ad been placed upon the table in front of us. In the process of
 riting, the pen was frequently heard to strike against the mouth
 the inkstand in obtaining its supplies of ink. I have also had
 hers written in ink, and on one occasion in the morning; not,
 wever, in a full light, but with the shutters partially closed.
 exhibiting these cards, do not forget to state that this result
 s only been arrived at, after frequent sittings of the most
 cient attention to conditions. At first the initials of the name,
 lely done, was all the spirit could execute; but by perse-
 ance from these rude beginnings, has the writing been brought
 its present state—and it is now executed more or less
 idly—according to the strength or weakness of the electrical
 ospheric conditions. Nearly all my spirit-communications
 now written by invisible hands, the spirits expressing a
 ided preference for this method over all others as being free
 n interpolation, and untinctured “*by any shadow of other
 ds.*” The same may also be stated with regard to the
 inous phenomena; which, from having been at the outset
 paratively dim, and of the size of an orange; are now in-
 ely bright, of almost any required size or shape, with power
 luminate and render visible spirit-forms or surrounding ob-
 —and that which was only achieved after repeated and long-
 inued experiments, is now accomplished with the greatest
 and facility, under ordinarily favourable conditions. These
 omena can only be witnessed by those having experience,
 by this means have become gradually familiarized with
 t, who are possessed of calm self-control in presence of such
 ling manifestations; and they can never (according to my
 vation) be obtained when the circle, either large or small,
 mposed of diverse and inharmonious persons. The spirit-
 seems too pure and ethereal to withstand the rude gaze of
 erely curious, or to come into the presence of, and in contact
 the conflicting doubts and disturbing influences of mixed
 nconfiding natures. One must become partially changed
 assimilated to peaceful harmonious conditions, or, to a
 n extent, be *en rapport*, before the spirit has power to con-

centrate and present itself in form. I fear I shall have already wearied you with the length of my communications. If, however, my experience shall prove of any benefit in *giving light* on this great truth, I shall have the satisfaction of having done my duty, and of having obeyed the injunction of the spirits '*to give it to the world.*'

"Very sincerely and truly yours,
"L.
"Benj. Coleman, Esq., London."

I recommend to my readers an attentive consideration of my respected correspondent's statement as to the probable means to success and causes of failure in obtaining spiritual manifestations. The electrical atmospheric conditions of which he speaks, will no doubt account for the failures which at times occur even with the most powerful mediums. We know of course that a want of harmony in the circle is another cause of failure, and tends to lessen, if it does not altogether destroy the value of an experiment. Thus, early inquirers are disappointed if they cannot at once see and hear something equal to what they have heard of from other witnesses, unacquainted with the fact that there is more or less of specialty with every medium, and, therefore, that phenomena through different persons will vary both in kind and in degree.

I have had as much experience, perhaps, as most persons in observing the impressions made on the minds of the uninitiated, when first viewing the spiritual phenomena. A table rises from the ground, and is poised in mid-air, for a period of time, more or less, as I have seen it do an hundred times, despite of gravitation, and instead of pondering to consider the fact and the agency by which so great a marvel has been accomplished, the sceptic insists on something else being lifted. Why not a chair? Why not a sofa or piano? And if neither chair, sofa, nor piano can be raised on the instant, the rising of the table goes with him for nothing. This is thought by many to be quite fair, philosophic and rational, and they have the boldness too to assert that they came to the investigation in a calm and dispassionate spirit free from prejudice. The Rev. Dr. Maitland, in considering the evidence for and against this subject, says:—

"If Samuel Johnson had made an affidavit, that twenty times in twenty different years he had seen his chair jump over his table at his word of command, thousands from the day of the date of the said affidavit to the present would have thought the matter worthy of discussion, even after philosophers had strictly forbidden any such goings on, under the penalty of their wrath and rebuke. There would have been a constant reclamation that Johnson was purblind and stupid, and went to church, and always believed everything.

"Some very sharp people would be calling for proof of Johnson's ever having existed—some would denounce the document as a forgery, without looking at it—others would quietly state that the thing was impossible, and the story not to be listened to by persons of mental cultivation—others would satisfy select companions, and perhaps (if very stupid) themselves, by asking, "Why did not the table jump over the chair?" or, "If the chair could jump over the table, why could it not crawl under it?" or, "If Johnson's chair did it, why do not other chairs do it?" or, "Why don't I see it if he did?" But notwithstanding all this, even while this funny philosophy was in some sort flourishing, and explanations of detective philosophers (the Faradays and Brewsters?) were civilly listened to by those who could keep their countenances, and wished that what they heard might be true, there would still be thousands and tens of thousands who would not know how to get over, or what to make of such an affidavit from Samuel Johnson."*

The cards sent to me by Mr. L., and now in my possession, are certainly marvellous productions, not that they convey any elevated thought or deep philosophy, but that they prove our intimate and near relation to the spirit-world, and that spirits in their intercourse with mortals retain the natural sympathies and affections of their earth-life. Two of these cards, the one purporting to be written by the spirit of Mr. L.'s wife, and the other by the spirit of Benjamin Franklin, are here given to the reader, as *fac-similes* of the originals: The coming together of two such opposite spirits as the gentle, loving wife, and the stolid philosopher, will be explained by a perusal of the following messages received, and description of the phenomena witnessed by Mr. L. during a series of continuous sittings, taken from his diary:—

"*July 4th, 1861.*—Upon the evening of my birthday, and just before leaving home for a sojourn in the country, the following message was addressed to me by the spirit of my wife."—

"*July 4th, 1861.*

"This morning's rising sun found me watching by your bed. You, dear Charley, feel the kiss you wakened with? How much I could say were I in the form, and yet I could not say one half of it. I do *now*, for every word is clothed with the spirit from whom it comes. This day is of *great* worth to me, darling, from the fact that the greatest joy of my life was then sent into this world. I am happy to be so closely with you, happier still to make you conscious of my presence. I often hear you reason with others upon this truth. It is well to try to teach them, and

give them light, but talk not to those who will not listen. You can preach to the wind, it will not hear you. Tell them, darling, that the greatest truth, the most improbable truth, when once understood and learned, when once made clear, proves of great value when familiar to an unknown longing for something felt, yet not seen. What is more important to yourselves than that you should prepare yourselves daily for the life hereafter. The time must come when the soul will return truthful and powerful to Him who gave it. You no sooner wake to a sense of being, than you sigh to learn the *spiritual* part of which you are formed. I have learned, Charley, that we commence to live here before we are born into the world. The soul aspires ever higher and higher where it is *pure*. The spirit changes with the life; blessings attend patience and forbearance. I shall go with you to-morrow, and, oh, I hope that I shall be able to give you some sweet tokens of my presence. I will if I can. While I write Doctor Franklin is aiding me. The atmosphere weakens, and I will say good night: good night, and still I cannot go or say good night without a desire to say more. My darling, what a blessing we have: what a privilege. Be happy. Meet soon again. Your dear head shall rest near mine to-night, while blessings fall on us both. Doctor Franklin will shew himself to you soon. We will both come together. Good night, good night.

“ESTELLE.

“July 4, 1861.”

“July 15th, 1861.—The following card was written upon my return from the country. I was at home alone, my family being absent, and a little relic, *which had disappeared before leaving* (two weeks since) was returned with the message—

“Dear Charley,—I return the little relic with many blessings, and many kisses. Will you accept them all? I shall be with you, Charley, in our house. I will walk by your side in the shade of the evening, and in the morning time you will not miss me, for I shall be there. You will not feel sad. How could you, when I shall be near to comfort you. I say you will not. I mean, dear, that you *must not*. Be happy—I am—and never undervalue these *great* blessings. Teach others to *value* them. God bless you evermore, and let not a shadow cross the bright interior. Let not the counteracting opinions of others jar upon the truths given so freely to you, lest I too become disturbed, and a barrier be placed between our two souls which now breathe together. Men understand too little of this world, and forget that the other is its counterpart, only purified from sin. Yet we must all have charity. To err is human. The light of a soul is easily blown out. The shadows will grow longer upon it if

mitted to remain and become sorrows. Never doubt, as faith is believing in God. The great star lights your path, and flowers loom for us both. God bless you. Good night, but not good ye. Good night. "ESTELLE."

"July 21st, 1861.—At the expiration of the usual half hour of quiet, the bolt of the lock was turned violently backwards and forwards, and various other demonstrations took place, such as striking violently upon the bureau with a Bible lying thereon. The rustling, and a tap upon my shoulder, indicated the presence in me of the spirit. My head was pushed gently forward by spirits, and bent towards the table to prevent my looking in the direction of the light, and soon after the electrical rattle approaching, we raised our heads to see the same beautiful spirit surrounded with flowers; while bending over her left shoulder, another face was indistinctly visible. As a spirit purporting to be Dr. Franklin had promised to make an effort to appear on this occasion, I looked for him. My wife soon appeared again, when I found that by turning my gaze from her, she could approach much nearer, and thus re-appeared very vividly four or five times, the whole expression and smile being perfect; during the last two or three appearances, I noticed a dark figure indistinctly standing at right, between myself and her. Some ten or fifteen minutes elapsed, when from behind us was heard a movement and a ringing upon something like glass, with a clear sound, resembling one of a silver bell. This as it approached us, was placed near my left ear, and was struck vigorously, the reverberation passing through different parts of the room. The tone was exquisite; at first rather solemn, but becoming more and more musical and agreeable. The medium assured me there was no glass ware or vessel of any kind in the room, and my subsequent examination proved the correctness of the assertion. The spirit at the same time informed me that it was not a material but a *spiritual instrument* brought by Dr. Franklin. This instrument, whatever it was, was freely placed on my head, and rubbed against it and my back, feeling like a glass globe of about six inches in diameter. It was also placed against my ear after having been struck. Its vibrations were distinctly felt, and its reverberations became almost ringing. I was told to sing. I did so. The instrument drummed upon in perfect time to an air, with sounds evidently loud to be heard in other rooms in the house. This more vigorous strokes were made, the instrument being moved towards my ear, and while the reverberations were going away, I found the spirit could, by its aid approach me with wonderfully augmented facility. During this time I was kissed tenderly, and a successful effort to speak was made, a few words however only being articulated. A half or

three-quarters of an hour having thus been spent, the sounds ceased, and shortly after the spirit of my wife again appeared in great splendour, approaching very near, and this time the figure of a man was distinctly visible. He seemed short, thick set, heavy, with broad shoulders, dressed in black, and wearing a black velvet cap, the silk tassel of which hung dangling about six inches long in front of his face. Here the medium became very nervous, and I have no doubt prevented the face being made more distinctly visible. I saw a face dimly, but no recognisable features; while those of my wife were radiant. A second and third time the effort was renewed, but the force had become exhausted by the wonderful manifestations so long continued, when we were told that *complete success had been prevented by our starts and exclamations*. The following explanation was written upon a card. 'The echo you heard was brought for the purpose of aiding me in speaking. It was an invention of Dr. Franklin's for me. You see that he is still useful and great. How grateful I am to him; how grateful you should all be. You shall hear music from heaven soon.—ESTELLE.' By raps, I received the following, as well as answers to my questions—'Dear Son, You do not know the great object I have in future for you.—B. F.' Question by me, 'Why am I selected for these developments?' Answer—'You are the only person we have found who could come in our personal sphere and respond to every condition.' Question—'What enables me to come into your sphere?' Answer—'The organisation and interior mind; the soul and comprehension; you have all combined in a fine spiritual sense.—B. F.' I scarcely need say that with my usual care I minutely examined every part of the room before unlocking the door, and could find no trace of anything by or upon which the sounds described could have been produced. *The same phenomena again occurred a few evenings subsequently with the same results.*"

"July 25, 1861.—After the usual preliminary and the electrical rattle, my wife stood by me in all her beauty, and, on this occasion, her complete figure, dressed from head to foot in white, with roses, and her hair bound with what seemed to be a narrow blue velvet ribbon, the ends of the hair being visible over her right shoulder appeared. Above her head was the bright gauze previously described. Her features and expression were perfect, and she came, apparently, with great ease and without effort. After appearing once, she rapped out upon my shoulder as follows —'The next time I appear, I will bring a little glass.' She soon came, holding in her hand a small oval mirror about three inches long, the glass glistening in the light. An indistinct figure (supposed to be Dr. F.) seemed to hold the light like a lanthorn; his dark arm passing across her waist, while his whole figure was distinctly

visible. She seemed now to come with her little mirror more easily than ever before, and returned to us at least a dozen times, in loveliness and beauty beyond description. My theory is, that the mirror was intended to attract and divert a portion of our gaze, which at times is no doubt too strong for spiritual presence. I have frequently observed that looking intently at the light itself disturbs its brightness, and listening to spirit-sounds with great fixedness disturbs them also.

"August 18, 1861, 8 p.m.—Present, the medium and myself. Atmosphere heavy and warm. Carefully examined the room, locked the door, took the key and made all secure. Sat in quiet half an hour, when a spherical oblong light, enveloped in folds, rose from the floor to our foreheads, and rested upon the table in front. By raps—'Notice how noiselessly we come.' Heretofore the light had generally appeared after a succession of startling sounds and movements of moveable objects; but in the present instance, it was quiet. From this time, 8.30, till 11.30, the light was constantly visible, but in different forms. It remained upon the table a full half hour, the size and shape of a large melon. As during this time it was passive, I asked if it could rise, thereupon it immediately brightened, flashed out, and rising, seemed a living breathing substance. By raps—'This is our most important meeting, for it brings to our circle two powerful spirits great and good.' The light became gradually more powerful, and so brilliant upon the side opposite us as to illuminate that part of the room. It now rose from the table, resting upon my head and shoulder, the drapery in the meantime touching and falling upon our faces, with a peculiar scent of violets. After resting upon, and pressing my head and shoulder, *with the sight of a living head*, it descended to the floor. I was now satisfied that the purpose of this meeting was some other than the appearance of the spirit of my wife. The light now rose with increased brilliancy, shewing a head upon which was a white cap surrounded by a frill. Seeing no face, I asked what this meant. The reply was by raps—'*As when I was ill.*' This was correct, for it was to all appearances the peculiar cap worn by my wife during her last illness. This living passed away, the light appeared again very brilliantly, showing a crown composed apparently of oak leaves and flowers, *very very* beautiful manifestation. I had brought with me on this occasion some new cards of a larger size, different from any before used, and had placed upon two of them private marks. These I put upon a book on the table. In a few minutes they were taken from the book, and one of them appeared near the floor, suspended three or four inches from the carpet—I could not judge accurately—but the light brightly showed the centre card

and radiated from each side to a distance of some three or four inches—or, in other words, the card was the centre of a circle of spirit-light, of a foot in diameter—while an imperfectly-shaped hand, holding my small silver pencil, was placed upon the card and moved quietly across from left to right, as though writing, and when finishing a line, it moved quickly back to recommence another. We were not permitted to look at this very long at a time, as our steady gaze disturbed the operating forces—but it remained more or less visible for nearly an hour. The full formed hand was seen only a portion of the time, but during all this time, a dark substance, rather smaller than the natural hand, held the pencil and continued to write. One side of the card being finished, *we saw it reversed and the other page commenced.* This is satisfactory evidence of the reality of spirit-writing, if any evidence can be satisfactory. There could have been no possible deception here. I held the medium's hand: the door was locked, and every precaution was taken by me as in previous instances. The identical cards were returned subsequently covered with the finest writing. I send them herewith:—

“August 21st, 1861.—The following card was written in explanation of the electrical chain, and its being broken:—

“‘The thread when broken is hard to mend, the work is not easy to get your conditions right, we surround you with influences which aid you to see us; these influences are so fine and pure that we find it difficult to keep them. When the chain is broken for a long period the mind seems changed, the conditions become less electrical, and that which we worked so long to make perfect, dissolves into more material things. For instance—You take a root and transplant it; its growth is retarded, and it takes a long time to re-bloom in its new change of soil. Were you to cease your investigations now and lose your interest—your ardency—we *could not* come in form. You know not how much depends on you for all the blessings you receive, darling—heaven is bright and beautiful. My home is there undisturbed by the cares of earth, unshadowed by sorrows—Oh, how happy, how blessed in you am I my own! How can I say enough! I walk with you daily through the sweet companionship of your thoughts. I hover over you at night, and cover you with my mantle of love. While you sleep and dream of me, visions of the future come silently and vividly to you. Oh, my loved one, do you know how happy you make me by your faith and trust in me! Your own in heaven.

“ESTELLE.’”

“August, 28th, 1861.—The following explanations of the disappearance of cards, &c., was written by the spirits:—

“‘My darling—We conceal the cards in the sphere of the medium, and make them invisible to the naked eye as other

atmospherical substances are. You have yet to learn that the atmosphere has great power, and does great wonders for the creation of men. We conceal the cards in the shadow of our spiritual atmosphere, and then we surround them with an electrical covering which withdraws them from the sight. Let Dr. Franklin explain, he can better.

“‘ESTELLE.’”

[By raps]:—“Do not be disappointed at the writing. The excitement in your mind disturbs me, and makes my hand quiver.” The writing of both the previous and the following card was regular, and not as well done as usual.] Explanation written by Dr. F.:—

“‘Let me explain the disappearance of the cards. We first spiritualize them so that you cannot see them, then we retain them between the two spheres, the natural and the spiritual. In this way we can often make material objects so spiritual that the naked eye cannot behold them, and thus retain them between the two spheres. We use elements of the atmosphere for our channel, and the elements of the atmosphere are the channel through which they manifest. Paper is most easily made invisible. Be not doubtful when things appear vague and incomprehensible.—B. F.’”

“September 11th.—The following directions were written on a card—

“‘Meet on Friday evening, for the purpose of seeing me in person. The hour, half-past seven; the place upstairs. Let your minds be calm and undisturbed; have faith, and do not mar the success by making exclamations. My son, fulfil the conditions, I will appear as naturally as when on earth. Once more, I repeat you, be calm; be not disturbed; have faith. The circle will all be here to aid me. Wonder not at their wish to come. One day God hath formed us all, and the great love to come where they can do good. Friday will be our greatest manifestation given, but not the greatest to be given.—B. F. ‘My darling, I have at times disturbed dear Dr. Franklin by your little inattentiveness. Do you know how much depends upon you? By sitting up, you greatly disturb us. Do not leave your seat when we tell you. Every time you get up, you break the chain.’”

“Friday Evening, September 13, 1861.—Unfortunately, the apartment for this evening, at half-past seven, was not punctually kept, and it was half-past eight before we were seated at table. I locked the door, taking the key after the usual examination of the room. We sat in quiet for three hours of an hour, when I became impatient from the length of time elapsing without a demonstration and was answered—*‘Failure to-night, be patient.’* I was then told to ‘open the door’ to admit fresh air, and afterwards to ‘darken.’ Imme-

diately upon resuming my seat, a light appeared upon the floor some four or five feet behind us, and rose with a rustling and rattling sound. This light assumed the form of a cylinder or canister, about six inches long by three in diameter, enveloped as usual in exquisite folds, while after each display a dark covering was thrown over it. This cylindrical light was waved over the table and shaken, producing the electrical rattle, and throwing its radiations upon the spirit, who was now discovered to be standing directly in front, where she remained for an unusual length of time, frequently changing her floral decorations, and assuming a great variety of positions. At first, she appeared as she had done before; then, with a large rose in her hair, placed behind the temple. The light then had the dark covering thrown over it. A rattling was heard. She again appeared, and a small white rose was seen on her forehead; and again, with a lock of hair drawn across one eye; then again, with a bunch of white tuberoses just behind the left ear in her hair. I asked to see her hand, when she came forward holding a pink rose and violets—the hand and arm distinctly visible. By raps, we were told to ‘*Notice the flowers,*’ which seemed so natural that I asked if they were not real flowers. The answer was, ‘*Yes, real flowers to us.*’ The room was warm, and a pearl-handled fan, which had been in use, was lying upon the table, together with a blank card, which had been placed there accidentally. Suddenly, in the absence of the light, the fan was heard to move, and *open and shut*. Upon the next appearance, I was very much astonished to see the spirit of my wife standing before us, holding the fan open before a portion of her face, while the blank card was held by a dark form about a foot above the table, the light shining full upon each. By raps, it was spelt, ‘*Dr. Franklin holds the card.*’ On looking carefully while the card seemed thus suspended, I discovered a dark form behind it, but saw no other face but that of my wife. The fan was opened and shut several times in full view while we were looking at it, and afterwards it was placed in my hand. The card was taken from its first position, and held in front of the spirit’s eyes like a mask, and both the fan and the card were seen in a variety of positions. For an hour and a half the spirit thus stood before us, at intervals invisible; but during these intervals of invisibility, the changes of position and of flowers and robes were arranged, each change being accompanied by the rustling sounds so often adverted to. The light frequently rested upon the head or shoulder of the medium ‘*gathering power,*’ and in consequence of the nervousness thus produced, and the delay at the outset, the spirit purporting to be Dr. Franklin, probably found it difficult, if not impossible, to make himself visible.

"September 14th, 1861.—The following card was written on Saturday evening, Sept. 14, after my return from a drive in the Central Park. A band of music had enlivened the scene, and the music, together with the beauty of the park, is alluded to—

"I have been with you to-day, dear Charley. I kissed your brow, and many times looked in your face to see if it still wore that look of peace and happiness which I love to see. Your thoughts were of the earth, but mine were with you, and though music filled the air, there was nothing so sweet to me as your voice. The cerulean heaven holds more happiness than the beautiful place which you have to-day visited; but there are no fields on earth half so beautiful as those through which your 'Estelle' wanders to bless her Charley. There are pleasant paths on earth for you to walk in, green and fresh. There is a sky above you, calm and serene. There are clouds also, which will often come to mar the happiest moment. The flower fadeth, the grass withereth, and the sky above you grows dark and gloomy; but the happiness that we feel, and the light which we have given you, lives for ever. Oh, dear Charley, what if weary cares come? What, if disappointments shadow over you? Bear them all. What are the troubles of life to bear, when you have one in heaven to share them with you? Always be happy, dear Charley, for I share both your happiness and sorrow. I long to come to you again in form. I long to stand before you as naturally as when in the earth-form. I long to speak to you face to face. Love to dear patient little C.—. Good night, good night.

"ESTELLE."

"Sept. 15, 1861.—Copy of card written on the above date—

"My son, when the atmosphere is cold, we shall have no difficulties, no obstructions, and the promises which we have made will be strictly fulfilled with many blessings. Of one thing let me warn you. When you sit at home, avoid exertion of any kind, but more particularly warn those who sit with you to avoid all and any exertion on their part, lest they cause involuntary movements of the table, and thus mar the beautiful paths which should never be tarnished by thought, word or deed. We can accomplish all without the aid of mortals, and bitter will be the life of those who attempt to deceive, or misuse the truth. Your truth and sincerity are bright gems in your nature. This is why I take pleasure in communicating with you, and this is why I have chosen you to work through. My love, good night.

"BENJ. FRANKLIN."

"Written communications are not tinctured by the reflection of another mind. We come to you without a shadow. This is why we are so happy to write our messages.

"BENJ. FRANKLIN."

"September 22nd, 1861.—By accident we were behind time about half an hour, when the following reproof was written on a card, which I send to you.

"My Son, promptness is requisite always to accomplish great objects. A kingdom has been lost before now, for want of punctuality; hence it is, that we often fail in fulfilling a promise, and are obliged to wait for some future opportunity to carry out our wishes and promises, which we would never fail in were the conditions favourable. Always keep in your mind the importance of the electrical chain which unites us with yourselves. We are very finely linked, and therefore the connection is very easily marred. When I name a meeting for the purpose of coming to you in form, you must endeavour to be here at the very moment, as we lose power by waiting for you 'to gather.' We are always ten minutes before the time, and when I was in the form, I never kept a party waiting for me—never failed to meet all my engagements. Once, when quite a lad, not being able to find my hat, I walked five miles bare headed, in order to get a situation in a printing office. The time is approaching when *all* that we have promised will be fulfilled. My son, you have a better conception of this subject, and more clearly understand it than some who have studied it for years. Be firm and faithful to your faith.

"BENJ. FRANKLIN."

"September 26th, 1861.—After the usual preliminaries, a terrific knock upon the table startled us. This was made by a heavy piece of marble, by chance lying upon the bureau, which was brought across the room by the spirits for the purpose. A brilliant light now rose, accompanied with rustlings and the electrical rattling and the spirit of my wife stood before us '*enveloped in white and flowers.*' Her face was radiant with spiritual life and beauty and expression. The light was held by an outstretched arm and hand passing across her waist, and displaying dimly the figure to which it belonged. After five or six appearances of my wife, the light rested upon the floor some 10 feet distant from me, then rising, it suddenly darted across the room backwards and forwards, until having gained sufficient power, it flashed brightly upon the wall, and brought into relief the entire figure of a large heavy man, who stood before us. He was rather below the medium height, but broad-shouldered, heavy, and dressed in black, his back towards us, and his face not visible. He appeared thus three times very perfectly, remaining in view each time for about a minute. The moment his entire form was discerned by us, rappings commenced simultaneously in all parts of the room, which continued during the time he was in sight, as if to express delight at the achievement of a new success. On asking if the spirit we saw was that

of Dr. Franklin, we were answered in the affirmative by three heavy dull knocks upon the floor, as though made by a heavy foot, which were several times repeated. During this sitting the spirit of my wife approached, tapping me upon the shoulder, smoothing my hair, and caressing me, *while her long tresses as natural as in life dropped over my face, with the peculiar scent of delicate freshly gathered violets.* A new and very curious manifestation now took place, shewing us how the echoes were produced, and there was spelt out: '*Darling, have you not been rewarded?*' The light in producing these echoes or explosions assumed a lily shape, nearly the size of my head, and so brilliant as to light the entire surface of a table and the centre of the room, so that Miss Fox and I could see each other distinctly, as well as various objects in the room. Then bounding up and down from the surface of the table some 12 or 18 inches it struck the table, and descending on my arm, produced the raps or echoes."

"September 27.—The following was written upon a card, in explanation of the manifestations of last evening:—

"My darling, I was so happy to come here to you last night with Dr. Franklin; and on that sweet occasion when I could come in flowers and white robes, with a crown of happiness. I was very happy, and I knew that dear Dr. Franklin was overjoyed. He lost his power in lending all his aid to me. Next time you will see his face: the effort last night aided him greatly for the next meeting. Good night, darling. "ESTELLE."

"We wish you to meet to-morrow night, but not for the purpose of seeing us. We will not attempt again to come in form until we have a cold atmosphere; but it is well to meet then, in order to keep the chain perfect. Great manifestations are in preparation for you. I long to come again in form; it must be on a cold night. "B. F."

"On another evening I wrote a number of questions for Dr. Franklin to answer, which was done categorically in writing, on cards, which I also send to you. I think it only necessary to draw especial attention to the following:—

QUESTIONS FOR DR. FRANKLIN.

- 1.—For a test, I wish you to give me the year of your birth?
- 2.—Also that of your departure?

ANSWERS.

- No. 1.—I was born in the year 1706.
- No. 2.—Departed the earth-life in the year 1790, after a calm struggle for life on the night of April 17th, a little before midnight.*

* "On the 17th of April, 1790, about 11 o'clock at night, he quietly expired, leaving a long and useful life of 84 years and three months."—*Vide Life of Benjamin Franklin.*

"The questions were put by me without premeditation, and without being seen by any one; and it is most important that I should add, *neither I nor the medium knew the date of Dr. Franklin's birth or death*, which, on reference afterwards, I was pleased and surprised to find had been correctly given by the spirit. "L——."

PUNCH AND THE DAILY TELEGRAPH.

PUNCH has been so long silent, that we feared he had become a convert, and which he must be in daily danger of, from the number of his immediate relatives and friends, who have convinced themselves, after inquiry, of the truth of the phenomena. Our readers will remember, how we were last year enabled to detail the experiences of the two sons of one of the proprietors of *Punch*, in company with one of the sons of Mr. Dickens, and also of Mr. Lecch, the rare illustrator, and back-bone of that witty journal, and how, after poking fun for more than a year at us, the principal editor himself thought it was time to investigate the subject, and then himself actually sought to have a *séance* with Mr. Squire. We advise the public to make the most of his jokes whilst they can have them, for they are in constant danger of losing him altogether. It must be a great strain, even on this veteran and somewhat stale joker, to be denying and ridiculing what his own proprietors and principal contributors have personal knowledge of the truth of, and what he has only himself not yet been able to investigate, because the requisite meetings could not be arranged. The readers of *Punch* can hardly hope for a long continuance of the present state of *Punch* editorialism under such circumstances.


The editor, in his number of the 19th October is certainly unfortunate in making fun of the narration in the *Spiritual Magazine* of a spirit-portrait produced in America of the mother of the narrator. He seems to think this is supremely ridiculous, and says that "from rapping the spirits have now got to drawing and painting," and "There's an end to portrait painting." Not at all, friend *Punch*, you will be glad to hear. You have many artists among your friends, and you can tell them that if sometimes the spirits do take portraits themselves, and present them to us, they also themselves sit to artists, and thus balance the account. This last fact does not rest on our assertion, but on that of your intimate old friend, Mr. Charles Dickens, who endorses that remarkable story of Mr. H., the artist, which has just appeared in *All the Year Round*. We, too, have verified the exact truth of that narration, and intend to present it next month to our readers,

with some even more wonderful particulars connected with it, which will introduce Mr. Dickens in a new character, to the great surprise of the *Punch* party. They, no doubt, by this time, know what we refer to.

To the *Daily Telegraph* we are indebted for a leading article, informing us that at Barcelona an active persecution has begun against the modern form of Spiritualism. "All rappers and table-turners are placed under the gravest censure of the Church. On the 9th October, by order of the Bishop, 300 vols. of spiritualist literature were burned on the public esplanade, on the spot where criminals are executed. This was under the immediate management and inspection of a priest in full canonicals carrying a cross in one hand, and a torch in the other. The reverend Guy Faux was hooted by the crowd, and he prudently retired, the spectators shouting 'Down with the Inquisition.'"

The writer then, after reprobating such proceedings, treats himself to his own sort of persecution, which is but little above that of his Barcelona brethen in common sense, whilst it falls short of it in common honesty. They, in their ignorant fanaticism, are acting in accordance with the instincts of their religion, and we can even respect the earnestness and zeal which they exhibit in their own stupid way. But for Mr. George Augustus Sala, who is well known as the writer of these smart articles which periodically appear in the *Telegraph*, in which Spiritualism is introduced, we cannot find so much excuse. He knows far too many among his literary brethren who have investigated the subject, and who have not feared to incur his ridicule, to be justified in saying that "nine-tenths are impudent and fraudulent raves who ought to be sent to the house of correction, and that of the silly dupes who have been induced by chicanery and varletanry to believe in the so-called marvels of Spiritualism, even-twelfths are hopeless fools." Mr. Sala had better consult Mr. Dickens or Sir Bulwer Lytton on this subject. He may get some useful information from them, and we shall also be glad he will account to his readers for this further fact of how he, Mr. Sala, went within the last few days, *incognito*, to a medium, and having written several names on a piece of paper, which has been handed to us, and is now in our possession, obtained answers, including the names of persons for whom he asked. We are informed that he expressed great surprise at the answers thus given, and that on leaving, he said that he had come much prejudiced against the subject, but that he now saw there was much more in it than he thought. The paper he left behind in his own handwriting, with which we are well acquainted, fully bears out this frank opinion of his, and shews how he stopped the medium from proceeding to the last letter of his name, *by saying*

that the three first letters, "S—A—L," were wrong, in order to keep his incognito, which was on the point of being discovered by the raps on the table. We thought this paper would be found useful, and therefore we preserved it; but we hardly expected so soon to be called on for it. If necessary, it can be produced in lithograph, and it will be found to fully bear out even more than we have said.

 MORAL FOR MR. SALA'S COMMON-PLACE BOOK.—If you intend to deny the facts which occur in the presence of a medium, take care that the spirits don't make you leave your notes behind you.

DISPLACEMENT OF COFFINS.

WE make the following extract from the *Essex Telegraph*. Our readers will find in it, if it be true, and we are making some inquiry as to this, a corroboration of the similar displacement of coffins, recorded at page 549 of our first volume, and further described at page 47 of the present volume. If any of our readers can give us any information as to the facts of the present case, or of any others within their knowledge, we shall be obliged. It seems that this time it is not the Od force, but *Chemistry, that is to unravel the mystery* :—

EXTRAORDINARY DISCOVERY.—Under the church of the secluded village of —, in Wiltshire, is a vault which for many years past has been the last home of the — family, who possessed estates in the parish acquired by marriage with a lady who was buried some weeks since. On opening the vault for the reception of her body it was found that the coffin of her deceased husband, formerly the squire of the place, had not only been turned completely round; but had actually got upon and across that of her deceased father. One who witnessed the opening of the vault was panic-struck at the discovery, though quite prepared for some little alteration of position; as, when the vault was opened for the "squire," the coffins of his son and daughter had shifted a considerable distance across the capacious vault; and the same person witnessed that the daughter's had done so when the son was buried. All were in lead coffins, and all were placed on the stone floor. Had this been witnessed by but one person it might have been doubted; but many saw it. All superstitious notions are repudiated by the writer of this account, who publishes these facts in the hope that "chemistry may unravel the mystery." The disturbed coffins had all become rounded on the top, evidencing the existence of gas within. None but members of the last family had ever been found displaced, neither had the other coffins become rounded.

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THE BIBLE.—The Bible is, indeed, a deep book, when depth is required, that is to say, for deep people. But it is not intended, particularly, for profound persons; on the contrary, much more for shallow and simple persons. And therefore the first, and generally the main and leading idea of the Bible, is on its surface, written in plainest possible Greek, Hebrew, or English, needing no penetration, nor amplification, needing nothing but what we all might give—attention.—*Ruskin*.

## THE SPIRITUAL BODY,

By the Rev. B. F. BOWLES.

Is there another body that is not subject to death at all, either in early or later life? Is there a body that Death cannot touch, so ethereal as to escape all his blows?—a body better protected by its subtlety than a mailed warrior?—a body which, from its own nature *must* rise triumphant from the contest? Paul believed it. He would have the Corinthians believe it. I believe it. I would have you believe it. But how shall I secure this faith where it does not exist? How shall I fix and confirm it where it is wavering? If dim and indistinct, how shall I make it clear and definite? Nay, how shall I exalt it to a living reality?

Shall I tell you that many of the old philosophers believed in spirit that survived the shock of death?—that when Christ came he concurred in this opinion?—that he contended for it with the doubting Sadducees?—that when on the cross he promised the dying thief that, though in a few moments more his *body* would succumb to torture, *he* should be with him in paradise? Shall I tell you that he said no more on this matter, for the simple reason that it was generally believed by those he taught, excepting the Sadducees? Shall I, then, tell you of his authority as a teacher on this subject?—of his wonderful works, of his resurrection, confirming his prophecy and illustrating God's power, and rest the matter here, saying, "You *must* believe because of this.

To some this might seem satisfactory, to others not. Were you in possession of all the evidence which was before the minds of those who believed and taught this doctrine, you might not even then be able to accept it, your minds requiring more evidence than theirs. You may not be in a condition to perceive the force of evidence by which another is convinced. Where he finds mere logic, you may discover only fallacy. All possible proof may be required to convince some before me, and even that may fail. This I crave for myself, and such as I have I offer to you.

Paul seems to have been anxious to secure conviction from whatever source. He presented a part of the evidence to which I refer; but he did not stop there. After betraying his impatience with the sceptic, by calling him a *fool* when he queried as to *how* the dead could be raised up, he showed his own good sense by at once referring to the *facts of common observation in nature*, as illustrating the possibility, and even probability, of there being *other* modes of life for man than that here lived.

If God could make different kinds of flesh; different material elements; "celestial bodies and bodies terrestrial;" if he could

make the sun different from the moon, and every star different from every other star, could he not give to man another body, when this had fallen in death? Thus reasoned Paul from nature. And, finally, he declared the *fact*, "There is a natural body, and there is a spiritual body." The one was as real as the other. The natural body was to go down like the body of the grain, in comparative dishonor and weakness, falling into the dust of dissolution; but the spiritual body, like the germ, was to spring up in glory and power. Thus he appealed to their reason, and did but affirm what he felt it must concede. But now pursuing the same course, I will press the same appeal from other data.

But before calling your attention further to evidence of the existence of the spiritual body, we should agree upon what we are to understand by the term *spiritual*. May we not all agree upon the common idea, (whence has issued the word,) that the spiritual is the unseen, and to our senses intangible? I think we may.

Now that there is an unseen force within us, constituting our interior personality, and that manifests itself through these outward forms, seems self-evident. It is this that is the source of all outward action, and that receives from without all impressions. It is this that constitutes the *I* or the *me*, and to which we refer when we use these pronouns. We are all conscious of this unseen self. (I think none will assume that this consciousness is the fruit of education. I think all will admit that it is essential to our common humanity.) And when we speak of seeing, of hearing, of tasting, of smelling, of feeling, we refer to a being who possesses all these senses, but who exists behind the organs of their outward manifestation. I do not properly say "my *eye* sees," or "my *hand* feels," but rather "*I* see *through* my eye," and "feel *with* or *through* my hand." Nor do I say, "my *brain* thinks," but, "*I* think *with* my brain." And our common consciousness approves.

And the one who possesses all these senses *is never seen*. I never have seen you, nor you me. We have only seen the manifestations of each other. The individual who dwells in either of the living forms before me, or the one who occupied the form that is dead, has never to material senses been tangible. We have never come *directly* in contact with him or her, but always through the mediation of the outer form. Each of us, then, in our real self, answers to the common idea of spirit; we are intangible.\*

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\* The perception of this great truth may be helped by an extract from the late inaugural address of Professor Harley, to the class of the London University Medical School. "Recent physiology had pointed out to them that the phenomena of life were the effects of a combination of the natural laws which governed the universe at large. It had shewn them that every organism in the possession of life, no matter whether it were at the bottom of the vegetable or at the top of the animal scale, was undergoing never-ceasing change, and that notwithstanding the apparent stability of its frame, every particle comprising it was transient in



And again, each of us, in his voluntary action, betrays poses and desires, intelligence and thought; and surely we not attribute these to tangible matter. It would be repugnant all our sense of fact, to affirm that *flesh* could *think* and purpose. We inevitably refer all such action to the unseen. It is the unseen that loves, and that we love.

And now with reference to the spiritual *body*, it seems natural to conclude that these secret powers exist in *combination*, forming interior *being*. We refer them all to one, and yet each is distinct. The same being sees, thinks and loves. And yet, seeing, thinking, and loving, are quite different. There is then an *organization* interior to this physical organization, possessing in itself each of the senses, and all of the intellectual and emotional power we see expressed through the exterior form. And, being so, it is in a proper sense, a *body*. It is in all things, but its *texture*, like the body we see. Only in this, (its texture,) can we mention ought that the body possesses that the spirit hath not. Indeed, except this and the *shape* of humanity, the body hath nothing when the spirit hath gone out. It hath no senses, no power. Here, then, we have not only the existence of a spirit, but a spiritual *body*, in the sense of organization.

But what of its substance? Hath it substance? or, is it without? I have often received the impression from friends that they supposed a spirit to be without substance. Perhaps they had no clear conception of what a spirit is. Perhaps I was unable to give their conception. But, so far as able, it seemed to be, in the words of another, "the most definite conception of nothing ever given to mankind." And yet I think it manifest that spirit hath substance. To see this truth, let us inquire what we mean by *substance*. Do we mean some *particular* thing? No, for

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truest sense of the word. The appearance of identity which the living organism presented was an illusion, for every day, every hour, every moment, parts were wearing away. No movement could be made, no function performed, without a destruction of matter. Every breath he drew, every word uttered, every thought was accompanied by a metamorphosis of material. I might they exclaim, 'How wonderfully, how fearfully are we made!' But it was one perpetual state of death, and if to live was to die, so to die was to live. It was not only in a spiritual but in a physical sense. For what was the disorganization of the dead animal or vegetable being, but a change from death to life? For life was everlasting; at least the animal organisation did not begin to live at the time of birth, at the period of quickening, nor at the moment of conception. The life that was given to the ovum was transmitted by the parent, not created. Indeed, there was but one creation of life of each species, and from beginning until now that same life had been handed down from parent to offspring in one uninterrupted chain, and that chain would last as long as the species existed. They could not at the present day entirely separate the physical from the physical, the spiritual from the material. They could not tell how, the where, or the why, as thought sprung into existence; but biology told them, science told them, all nature told them, that a change in character had accompanied the evolution of that thought."—[*Ed.*]

everything is substance. Do we not mean by this term *something*, in distinction from *nothing*? Can we mean anything else? Borrowing an illustration, then, think of the millions of human bodies now being moved about by spirits. They would all stop were the spirits to go out. Is this immense amount of substance moved without substance? Moved by nothing?

Further to illustrate, think of the material universe all in motion. Go with the astronomer and count the worlds. Endeavour, then, to conceive of those unseen even by him. Ask yourselves of the immensity of their weight. You cannot answer. Well, they are all upheld; they are all in motion with inconceivable velocity. And by what? By nothing? By no substance, which is nothing? No, but by spirit, which is the greatest of all things. By an immeasurable organization of spirit. By that which constitutes all that is unchangeable in the universe. By God, who is a spirit, "without variableness or shadow of turning." And the effort to conceive of God without substance, is perilous to our conviction of his existence. And so of the human spirit. In such an attempt, we grapple with the impossible, and are worsted in the struggle.

But what *kind* of substance is it? The answer comes in the well-known and already recognized fact, (and we are dealing now with none other,) the fact that it is intangible to our outward senses. From this it is clear that to us it is indescribably fine in its texture; finer than aught we have ever seen since we cannot see it.\* It is too fine to blend with that of which these forms are composed. Only (as we have seen,) as it acts through the grosser, can we recognize its presence.

And here, in the second place, lies the grand secret of its *indestructibility*. *Gross matter decomposes*. The less gross, the less is it subject to decomposition. The animal body is easily decomposed, but its elements remain unharmed. So all forms of gross matter may be resolved into elements which no chemical process can affect. And yet these elements are sufficiently gross to be susceptible of recognition by our senses. And if *they* cannot be destroyed, how certain it is that the spirit, so vastly more subtle, shall live for ever! That the finger of death cannot touch it.

And, moreover, you have often seen practical evidence that

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\* Though this *fineness*, in the sense in which the writer uses it, is sufficient for his argument, yet we conceive that to speak of spiritual substance as *fine*, may lead to a great misconception, if it lead the reader to think that it is only an attenuation of what is called matter. This mistake lies at the bottom of all the error of scientific and religious thought as to spiritual substance, which in its nature and essence cannot be compared with, or drawn out from, material substance. It is on a different plane of existence, and may be, and we believe is, far more substantial and real than material substance, which is a mere accretion according to natural laws, upon the true spiritual forces, which thus are born into this outer plane of existence.—[Ed.]

this spirit does not depend for its *existence*, but only for its *manifestation to our senses*, upon its connection with the body. A man loses a limb, but he has lost none of his spirit. He has the same *sense* of locomotion, if I may so speak, that he had before. And if you will furnish him an artificial limb, he will manifest it. Is this cork limb, now, a part of himself, and does the existence of his spirit depend upon it? No. And yet as much as upon the limb of flesh. His eyes are impaired. Is so much of his spiritual sight gone? Give him a pair of spectacles and see. You will not now say that the life of his spirit depends upon the spectacles. And yet as much as upon the physical eye. "Ah, but the brain? What of that? Destroy that, and what do you know of the spirit? What can you say for its existence? Isn't that the spirit itself?"

Let us, by illustration, see if there is any evidence of it. Let me suppose that you are in London, having a message that you wish to transmit by telegraph to Birmingham, Sheffield, and York. But you discover that the wires are out of repair beyond Manchester. Your message, then, can only go to that city. But now you are informed that the storm has broken them down between Birmingham and Sheffield. Your message then can only go to Birmingham. But, worse yet, the battery itself, in London, is now destroyed, and your message cannot even start by telegraph. It cannot be committed to the wings of the lightning; and, till another means of communication is found, you cannot communicate it to even the nearest point. As a *telegraphic* message, it is unknown. But does it follow that you or your message have no existence? Has the destruction of the London battery destroyed either? Surely no. Nor is even the fluid itself that through those metals was to have been your messenger, at all diminished or changed in its nature. Let the human body, then, take the place of the electric apparatus, the brain answering to the battery. If this form is perfect in all its parts, the spirit may send its message to the sole of the foot. But amputate the foot at the ankle joint, and the message must stop there. Amputate the limb at the next joint above, and it must stop there. Destroy the brain, and, as a *brain* message, it must be unknown, even as was the other as a telegraphic message. But why say the message itself, or its author, is no more? Why say that the spirit's unseen and most immediate servants are destroyed? The truth indicated is that it and they remain the same. But it rests not upon the illustration. That is simply to show the want of foundation for the assumption that the brain is the spirit itself. But by this let not your thoughts be drawn from the important fact that the tangible elements of the body even are indestructible, and the inevitable inference that the intangible spirit *must* be so.

One more thought to the same point. Why should we assume the spirit to be a dependant upon the body, when the body is constantly acknowledging itself its servant? A poor servant often, I grant, but so far as it acts at all, acting for the mind and heart, the intellect and affections, which constitute the spirit. And not only does the spirit *control* the outward form, but by a natural law, as the body loses its substance, the spirit attracts more, thus keeping its house complete. I say the spirit does this, because when it is gone out, the attraction ceases.

And now, how natural the conclusion that when by accident or disease, the body becomes unfit to serve the spirit, it goes out and attracts to itself a new body, a new medium of action and impression? That it continues to live as an individual being, maintaining its identity and all that we saw here manifested, we have seen is beyond a place for doubt. And the *life* implies the *mode* of life adapted to its wants. What that mode is we may not *know*, in the absence of uninterrupted spiritual sight. Its want of analogy to the present modes of life may forbid it. As the products of a foreign land can only be described to me so far as they are analogous to those I know, so only can I receive a knowledge of the spirit's new home and the substance of its body.

Of its desires, will, and power, I may only (in the absence of communication,) infer from the past, from what I have known of it. Were its last manifestations of love, then I infer present love. Did it then wish to benefit me, then I infer the continued existence of this wish. Was it sometimes able to secure conditions by which to accomplish its will concerning me, I must infer that it may again secure these conditions. In the absence of proof to the contrary, it is natural to draw these inferences from what the past has taught us.

But we may be reminded that we are still enclosed by crude matter. And it may be inferred that by this we are hidden and insulated from the disembodied, even as they are from us. But if a spirit's possession of a form of flesh is essential to its knowledge of and communication with one in such form, how is it that God knows and affects us? For God is a Spirit. Let me not be understood as assuming that the disembodied human spirit is equal in power to God, but I would simply have you see that there is nothing essential to spirituality to forbid its communication with spirits still in the flesh. There is nothing here upon which to base a denial that spirits, that have passed out of these forms, may again reach those dwelling in them.

I think you will all concur with me in the thought that God is at least as intangible as the spirit man. And yet, He is in constant connection with crude matter. There is none too gross for his touch. We infer that He acts upon it through a long chain

of media, every link of which, as it recedes from the hand that holds it, is less and less refined, but the connection is not less actual. Even so with the human spirit. We suppose it to have no *immediate* connection with the forms we see and touch; but though *mediate*, it is not less real. The hand of the pilot guides the long "floating palace," it is through a chain running through her entire length and connecting with the rudder. So by a chain traversing the universe doth the Great Sovereign Spirit control all, from centre to remotest bounds. So doth the spirit, man, act through the subtle fluids, through brain, nerves, muscles, and bones to the finger's ends, and even the instruments they hold. In spirituality, then, I think you must bear me witness, there is nothing to forbid the thought that spirits, out of the flesh, reach and affect those in the flesh, thus triumphing over the death of the body. It becomes, then, a question of *fact*, to be determined by other data. In the absence of *experience*, this may be *doubted*, but not on this ground *denied*. In the presence of experience, and on the part of such as have the evidence of their own senses to this point it must be affirmed. By the use of their senses they are to be judged, and must judge.

Such is some of the evidence I draw from our *common knowledge*; such the inferences from common ground, and which, for this reason, I think should find general acceptance. Evidence that "*there is a spiritual body, indestructible, independent of the physical, and hence immortal.*"

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## A HUMAN SPIRIT SEEN.

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22<sup>nd</sup> June, 1861.—Mr. G. B. informed me to-day, that his son, aged about 20, passed out of the body six weeks ago, about four o'clock in the morning, in the presence of himself and wife. Afterwards he heard the following:—His brother-in-law, residing in Bishopsgate, E. C., was awoke one morning about four o'clock, by some one pressing his knees firmly;—rousing himself, he saw his nephew standing by his bedside; they looked earnestly at each other, and then the nephew seemed to go away. At breakfast he said to his family—"George is gone." "Why?" "Because I saw him this morning." Two hours after a letter came to him from Mr. B. by post, informing him of the death of  
JOHN JONES.

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In the month of July, 1858, there were in the list of lecturers published in the *Banner of Light*, seventeen Spiritualist lecturers announced; in 1859, the same month, there were thirty-four; in 1860, in the same month, there were fifty-seven; in 1861, in the same month, there were one hundred and thirty-three.

## REICHENBACH ON SPIRITUALISM AND THE OD FORCE.

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THE first of the two following letters by Baron Reichenbach, the distinguished chemist and discoverer of the *Od*, of which we hear so much in the discussions on Spiritualism, was sent to Dr. Langsdorff, and is published in *The Banner of Light*. The second has been addressed to us during a recent visit made by the Baron to this country. Whilst here, Baron Reichenbach, for the first time, saw many of the phenomena of Spiritualism, which he investigated with the greatest care.

While those who have little or no practical acquaintance with the subject assure us that the action of this newly-discovered force, is adequate to the explanation of those phenomena which we regard as of spiritual origin, the highest authority on the question comes to a different conclusion. He regards "the great influences of Od upon the human spirit" as the mere "physical side of the matter"—"the roots by which it adheres firmly to the ground," and he was thankful to see the day when all his former discoveries shewed themselves as the portal through which it was now possible for him "to go forward into the spiritual department." Deeply shall we regret it, if the hostility of men of science, stronger it would seem in Germany even than in England, should divert him from this intention. The investigation of Spiritualism by one so eminently qualified, and who will carry the facts and methods of science into its prosecution, cannot fail of most valuable results. The interest of the subject will not be exhausted in our generation; and though it may not add to his immediate reputation, justice we feel sure will be done him in the end, and, what is of more importance than any personal consideration, the interests of truth will be advanced.

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"Respected Sir,—Your valuable letter of April 7th I have read with interest and attention. I was much pleased to receive through a pen so well-informed and intelligent as yours, a good description of the present condition of Spiritualism. Here in Vienna, also, I have often heard from persons in the somnambulist state, of the division of human nature into body, soul, and spirit—from persons who were far from knowing anything of American Spiritualism. I have, upon that point, made many investigations, of which no one in Germany can venture to speak, unless he is willing to be instantly cast off by all the world. Out of a courageous zeal for truth, one might, to be sure, disregard such treatment; but *cui bono*? It is well enough to quarrel with

all the world, if, in the end, any good purpose can be reached by so doing. But in Germany one would gain simply nothing, and every earnest voice would, in the wide waste of public prejudice, die away and leave no trace behind. Proceeding on a thorough knowledge of my countrymen, I have therefore believed that if one would open a way for these important subjects, and a considerate study of them, the only method possible would be to begin at the outset with the physical side of the matter, first to lay bare the roots by which it firmly adheres to the ground, and when this has been done, suffer the plant to take form and shape in the air and sunlight. Thus, and in this direction, have my investigations been conducted, and the abundance of physical discoveries which I had the good fortune to make in the prosecution of them appeared to me so important, that I promised myself a hearty reception of them among men who make Nature their study. That was a great mistake. To people who but tardily advance, step by step, I presented quite too much at once of an important matter, and that is troublesome. It is with difficulty men abandon a rooted prejudice to come over to an entirely new view of things; from new views they are wont to shrink, and the more easily because it is more convenient to thrust them abruptly out of their sight than to study into them profoundly.

“The doctrines in regard to Od, which I have endeavoured to disseminate, are supported almost purely according to the method of the positive sciences; and only in their consequences do I touch, and that with silken gloves, the subject of somnambulism, and the first rudiments of clairvoyance. My first intention was to await the acceptance and the effect of these doctrines, and then to go forward into the spiritual department, to which the great influences of Od upon the human spirit—which no one can deny, and which I endeavoured to make thoroughly palatable to the nation in the Odic letters—were to serve as a handle. I was received by the public with joyful shouts; the Letters, in three editions, were devoured and translated into all the languages of Europe; but all in vain. The obstinate materialists like Liebig, Dubois, Vogt, and Schleiden, angrily assailed, without refuting me, or even venturing an attempt to refute me. I retorted sharply, and since then they have kept silence. But I have now all these gentry for deadly enemies, and as their influence is omnipotent, every effort which I might make, to gain a reception for my doctrines, must be suppressed. This is the reason why I can take no step forward in the higher spiritual relations of this subject here in Germany. I have done what a man could; may courageous successors, in ages more favourable, follow in my footsteps, and complete what my coteremporaries have rendered it impossible for me to accomplish. So much by way of answer

to your statements, and for explanation of what I have done and left undone.

"You have not read the "Sensitive Man." Considering the interest you feel in these questions, you should not neglect to give it an examination. On many points it would enable you to see more clearly. In America, but fragments of the work are known. I believe that a good translation into English would not be a bad speculation, if the disastrous war, into which unscrupulous men have plunged your happy land, did not engross universal attention.

"A slight spark of success has recently shone forth for me, and if it kindles may perhaps yet grow to a flame. I have just succeeded in getting a brief essay, on the phenomena of the Odic lights, which I have composed with great care, published in *Poggendorff's Annalen*. It has just appeared; and in this most exact of exact German journals cannot fail of producing its effect. If Poggendorff admits a second in continuation of the first, we have won a victory, the consequences of which must be incalculable. How interested I am in future developments, you can easily conjecture; perhaps I may hereafter have the pleasure to inform you in regard to them. But those consequences, gradually advancing in an ever-widening circle, would reach you at last.

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"With high esteem and regard, yours,

"Castle of Reichenbach,  
"May 13, 1861."

"REICHENBACH.

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"To the Editor of the 'Spiritual Magazine.'

"Sir,—Very soon twice ten years will have flowed down the stream of time since the word 'OD' was introduced into science. In my different works it has been so exactly defined, and its derivation explained, that one would hardly think it possible for a difference of opinion to arise about it. Nevertheless, I find that one was raised by the late Dr. Gregory, of Edinburgh, and has remained in English literature for several years; and that in the February number of the *Spiritual Magazine* of the present year, at page 90, is a letter, in which the expression *Odyle* is preferred to the word *Od*; and in that letter is implied my approbation of *Odyle*. This idea is erroneous. The word *Od* is derived from a Germanic root, from the Sanscrit, in which 'vā' signifies in German 'vehen'—to blow. Thus, in our time, in several districts of meridional Germany, they say, 'vahen' in place of 'vehen.' In Latin, 'vado,' in old Norse, 'vada,' means—I go quickly—I hasten away—I flow. From that, in old German, 'Wodan' means—all-pervading. It changes, in various districts,



to 'Wuodan,' 'Wodan,' 'Odan,' 'Odin,' signifying the all-pervading power, which is finally personified in a German deity. Od is consequently the name of a force, which, with irresistible power, rushes through and pervades universal nature. All this is explained in my 'Odic Letters,' in 'Der Sensitive Mensch,' and elsewhere. That Od was derived from the Greek ὀδαλός, or ὀδγλός, as is suggested, is erroneous, and that so much the more as these two words have no existence in the Greek language.

" Professor Gregory, in publishing his abstract of my book on the *Dynamics*, &c., did so without my knowledge, and sent me a copy as a present. I found in it the word Od changed into Odyle, and I was surprised at the deviation from my expression, which appeared to me as *malapropos* as it was incorrect. I say *malapropos*, because it destroys the monosyllabic brevity which I believed to be necessary to the signification of a fundamental principle; in transmuting a monosyllabic word into one trisyllabic; and at the same time rendering it more difficult and complicated for its ulterior combinations. Incorrect, I say, because it falsifies the sense which it ought to express: ὄλη, in Greek, signifies stuff, matter, and in this sense it is applied by the chemists in amyle, ethyle, cetyle; but Od is not palpable matter; it is an imponderable principle, the material nature of which is to us, as yet, as completely occult and hidden as it is enigmatic, as much so as that of light, electricity, and of other dynamics. Even the Greek word signifies specially gross matter—beams, girders, materials for building, and such things. How would it be possible, by any analogy, to apply such an expression to a principle, the finest we know in nature, to Od?

" I abstain from saying a word on the want of taste of combining a Greek word with one of a root purely Germanic, and of committing such a fault without the slightest necessity.

" I communicated to Dr. Gregory, without delay, my disappointment in this affair, and pointed out to him the error of this change in the word. I directed his attention to the translation of my writings by Dr. Ashburner, and to his conscientious exactitude towards his author, having left the sense intact and in its original state, and that I regretted much to find myself incapable of agreeing, in my ulterior memoir, to this denomination. Dr. Gregory, who was so learned and well-meaning a man, comprehended all this at a later period, and accepted it. In subsequent translations of my Memoirs, and especially in the 'Odic Letters' which appeared in Dr. Elliotson's *Zoist*, he dropped the word Odyle and restored the word Od.

" REICHENBACH.

" Albemarle Hotel, London,

" 26th Sept., 1861."

## ARE THE PHENOMENA KNOWN AS "SPIRITUAL MANIFESTATIONS" DUE TO THE OD FORCE, UNDER THE CONTROLLING AGENCY OF THE HUMAN WILL?

It may seem to the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, and to those familiar with Spiritualism, rather late in the day to raise this question; and we confess to be of the same opinion. Our Transatlantic friends cannot but smile to find reverend and learned men in this country putting forward, as demonstrated and wonderful truths, their own obsolete and exploded theories, refurbishing their broken weapons, and going to battle as confidently as if every sword was an Excalibar, possessed of which they must be invincible in the fight. The question asked at the head of our article is virtually asked, or rather, answered in the affirmative, in a pamphlet entitled, "Some Remarks on the Essay of the late Rev. Baden Powell, M.A., F.R.S., on 'The Study of the Evidences of Christianity,'" by the Rev. Granville H. Forbes.\* It is one of the many controversial productions occasioned by the celebrated "Essays and Reviews;" but it is the only one, so far as we know, which recognizes and builds its argument on the facts of Spiritualism. The author cites these facts "to meet that antecedent objection which is based on the supremacy of *physical* laws." These facts, he avers, "prove that there are laws in nature higher than mere physical laws,—laws which enable Intelligence and Will to act on material things." These facts have taught him that "it is consistent with the laws of nature that Mind should originate and direct the exercise of a force capable of neutralising, or holding in check, known physical laws." He does not, indeed, attribute the working of miracles to this power; but he considers that "if this principle be established, the physical argument against miracles falls to the ground." So far, he but re-affirms the arguments which Spiritualists have urged over and over again; and had he but prosecuted his inquiry to what we regard as its legitimate conclusion, he would have found the argument more complete than he appears aware of; and he would have saved it from some embarrassments, to which, in its present form, it appears open. While regarding the author's conclusion as defective, it is a pleasure to acknowledge his entire fairness in allowing those who take the spiritual view to state the facts and reasons for their faith. In the postscript to the second edition he inserts letters,

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\* Published by J. H. & James Parker, London and Oxford, 1861, price 4s.

in reply to his application for information, from, among others, Dr. Blank, Mr. Coleman, Mr. Hutchinson (for many years the chairman of the London Stock Exchange), and Mr. Howitt, besides quoting from the *Spiritual Magazine*. We have no doubt that a larger and a practical acquaintance with the facts treated of would rectify his judgment, and lead him to perceive the inadequacy of his present theory.

In this he makes no pretensions to novelty. He tells us, "To an American belongs the credit of having thoroughly investigated the question in a dispassionate and philosophical manner. He has proved to demonstration that all these startling phenomena proceed from the operation of a law of nature,—a law no doubt which is constantly in operation around us, but of which until now we were not conscious. I strongly recommend you to read his book entitled, 'Modern Mysteries Explained and Exposed.' . . . . I refer especially to the second part of the book, the subject of which is 'The Phenomena of Spiritualism,' in which the writer proves that these effects are produced by the instrumentality of a force in nature, known to scientific men by the name of the Odic force, the properties of which have been carefully investigated, both in England and on the Continent, by Ashburner, Reichenbach, Matteuci, Thilorier, and Lafontaine."

We may remark in passing, that whatever credit may attach to the Odic theory as an explanation of the "Phenomena of Spiritualism," is due, not to Professor Mahan, but to Dr. Rogers, of whose prior and far abler work, Mahan's is little else than a popular adaptation. The Odic force is so often adverted to, while its character is so little known, that an examination of its real, as distinguished from its reputed powers, is necessary in order to understand how far it is capable of explaining "the phenomena known as spiritual manifestations." For this purpose we will at present select the general class, known as "physical manifestations." But here we find the work already so well done to our hand by Professor Brittan, that we need only present his exposition.

This class comprehends the illustrations of what appears to be a spiritual agency exhibited in the mysterious movements of ponderable bodies. As Professor Mahan refers such phenomena to the Odic Force, we will institute a comparison, showing the nature of the accredited facts, and the insufficiency of the alleged cause to account for their occurrence. It is very well known that bodies weighing several hundred pounds are moved by an invisible power that is often well nigh irresistible; sometimes it is so violent and destructive, as to excite serious apprehensions; and yet, if we may judge from the results of the Baron's experiments, the impalpable currents of this gentle and noiseless *aura* would scarcely ruffle the plumage of a turtle-dove. His experiments abundantly show that the odic flames are harmless as the glowworm's light, and all the forces of this agent might dance on the face of a waveless pool and not ripple its surface in a thousand years.

Again, similar bodies are frequently hurled with remarkable force across the room, and with a momentum as great as if they were thrown from the right hand

of a strong man. Let any one throw a ball a distance of fifty yards, and he will find that less than *ten seconds* are required for its passage. The invisible powers make things move with an equal or greater momentum. Now, how does it happen that the objects thus moved, far transcend in the rapidity of their motion, the greatest possible speed of the Od Force. That agent could never travel that distance, by the most frequented routes in Austria, in much less than *thirty seconds*, as will be perceived from the following brief statement, which is copied from the Baron's book, page 236:—

*"The transmission of Od in the best conductors, as in metallic wires, goes on SLOWLY—twenty to forty seconds are required for a wire fifty yards long. Electricity traverses a million times longer space in immeasurably shorter time."*

Here is a difficult problem for Professor Mahan to solve. *Can an object move three times as fast as the motive power that propels it?* If it cannot do this, the Baron's Od Force will never enable us to account for those mysterious movements of ponderable bodies, which so frequently occur in the presence of Spirit-mediums. According to the statement of Von Reichenbach, *thirty seconds* is the average time which Od requires by the best conductors, to go fifty yards. At this rate it would travel one mile in something over a quarter of an hour! A fast trotting horse would make the same distance—on a good road—in *two minutes and thirty-eight seconds*. Thus it appears that Od under the most favourable circumstances, gets over the ground *about as fast as an ox team!* And this is the agent to which our author refers the modern miracles of strength and speed, and the still more "spiritual gifts" which were once reverently ascribed to a Divine source.

How then does the action of this agent explain the facts which Mr. Forbes admits? How does it "prove to demonstration that all these startling phenomena of Spiritualism proceed from the operation of a law of nature?" Can Od have lifted a strong heavy table, made to defy the efforts of raging lunatics, over the heads of those present, and on being requested to do so in order to test its power, break it in pieces, as related in the *Spiritual Magazine*, by a gentleman whose evidence Mr. Forbes quotes as that of "a physician occupying a position of great responsibility?" Can it play upon a piano, "when no person was within several feet of the instrument," and in full light bring "an accordion from the end of the room by no visible agency, and play an air asked for, with all its variations, in the most perfect manner," as testified by Mr. Coleman in the letter which Mr. Forbes has published? Can it travel with a message from Cape May to Philadelphia, a distance of nearly a hundred miles, and bring back an answer in half an hour, as in the case certified by Professor Hare in his "Experimental Investigation of the Spirit Manifestations." And, speaking of communications from his deceased father, he says—"So far from the ideas being obtained from my mind, which proceed from my spirit-father, he and I cannot come to one opinion on some points after much discussion."\* Professor Brittan,

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\* Mr. Forbes thinks it "a satisfactory answer" to this, to refer to "the extraordinary power of the human mind, or brain, under certain conditions, to act as it were two different parts quite unconsciously, as sometimes happens in dreams." But there is no analogy in the case. It is not pretended that Hare, when receiving these communications, was asleep, or in any state resembling it. On the contrary, he was quite wide awake, testing them, and making experiments in the full exercise of all his natural faculties.

in his discussion with Dr. Richmond, tells us, that "on the evening of February 2nd, 1852, an invisible agent, claiming to be the spirit of Louisa Mc Farland, purported to be present at a circle commenced in Lowell, Mass. and promised to convey a message consisting of *nineteen* words to Georgia. In less than one hour an invisible presence, claiming to be Louisa, actually delivered that communication, *verbatim*, to a circle commenced in the village of Atalanta, Georgia."

Was this "invisible agent" *Od*? If so, how odd that it should be mistaken in its own identity, and claim to be "Louisa," and that this "invisible agent" should be constantly making the same kind of mistake and telling the same falsehood, all the world over. Can *Od* "give information which *no living person* had previously been able to afford, concerning a missing document, and which information on inquiry was found to be correct," as in the instance published by Mrs. Crossland in her *Light in the Valley*? Can *Od* spell out by rappings, "join hands and stand round the table, but do not touch it," and produce, "seeming to come from the pedestal of the table, a series of strange sounds exactly like those heard in a carpenter's workshop,—sawing, planing, hammering, screwing, &c.," and this, too, to prove its identity with a deceased carpenter and joiner unknown to anyone present, who had died in a workhouse, visited by the lady who furnishes the narrative to Mr. Forbes, and who, on making inquiry next day, learnt that this had been his trade, and that he was the brother of a poor woman whom she had prevented from committing suicide?

Could it be *Od* which made Miss Mapes' hand write, as recorded at page 440 of the Magazine, when asked by her father for some proof of the identity of the spirit, that if he would look at page 120 of a book which was indicated, he would find his father's name written there, and which, on opening a case which had been closed for 27 years, he found to be written at that very page.

Can *Od* raise a table with a glass top (and therefore, by the way, a non-conductor of electricity) from the floor, notwithstanding all the *Od* force, and muscular force too, exerted by two strong men to keep it down, while the medium, a female in delicate health, only touched the table-top lightly with her fingers'-ends, as witnessed by ourself in the experiments we made in our own family? Can *Od* speak foreign languages by the tongues of persons unacquainted with them, as Judge Edmonds testifies is done by his daughter and niece, and in scores of instances by other mediums, whose names and addresses are published in his Tracts? Can *Od* produce paintings of fruits and flowers which have no prototype in the natural world, through the hand of a lady incapable of drawing even natural flowers; as in the case instanced by W. M.

Wilkinson in his "Spirit-Drawings," and in many other well-known cases; or produce, the one in eleven, and the other in eight seconds, those coloured drawings of which, with the signatures of the witnesses, *fac-similes* were presented in the last number of the *Spiritual Magazine*? Can *Od* perceive, reason, and reply? Is it capable of affection and resentment? Does it sometimes tell lies? Can it recollect the past and foresee the future? Has it power to heal the sick and discover the secrets of the dead? And if so, isn't it a little strange that these extraordinary powers should not have been found out till gentlemen in difficulties found them necessary to explain "what is known as the phenomena of spiritual manifestations?"

We would humbly suggest that if *Od*, the very existence of which is still denied by many of our most learned men, can do all these and many other equally wonderful things, it is time that experiments be commenced to see if it cannot be turned to some profitable account. It may be the greatest labour-saving invention of the age—a sort of universal servant-of-all-work. If it is really "under the controlling agency of the will," it might, for instance, be instructed to cut cabbages, peel potatoes, grind corn, preach sermons, write pamphlets, carry messages and parcels; in short, make itself generally useful. This indeed is really little more than is expected of it by its more sanguine apostles. Dr. Richmond, for instance, in his Discussion with Professor Brittan, intimates his belief that it will one day (of course "under the controlling agency of the will,") supersede steam in propelling cars along the railway. And this is the opposition that is offered to Spiritualism in the name of SCIENCE and COMMON SENSE!

At first the advocates of *Od* had recourse to "the reflex and automatic action of the brain" to eke out their explanation; but it was soon found that automatic action did not admit of that *contingent adaptation*, and of those multiform, unexpected, and varying results displayed in "what is known as the phenomena of spiritual manifestations," and then "the controlling agency of the will" was pressed into the service, and it does duty in this capacity in Mr. Forbes's pamphlet. Here, then, at last, the question is narrowed; it is admitted that the phenomena of intelligence cannot rationally be attributed to an unintelligent agent as their efficient cause. Whatever part *Od* as an "instrumentality" may play in their production, it can act in this capacity only as the servant of mind. The action of the human spirit is conceded. True, it is claimed that the manifestations are made *exclusively* by spirits still in the natural body; and we are not disposed to deny that some phenomena referred by careless observers to the agency of departed spirits, may have originated

within the sphere of mundane existence, nor to dogmatize concerning any of that portion which may fairly be regarded as of doubtful origin, when the ultramundane character of so many of the most important facts is obvious to the enlightened and impartial investigator. "The human spirit is the same in all its essential attributes, whether in or out of the corporeal form; and it must be obvious that the phenomenal manifestations of the soul, in its separate states, cannot be altogether dissimilar. Especially will the resemblance be most apparent wherever the physical and spiritual conditions of being are in the closest proximity. The higher and lower spheres of existence, like the different kingdoms in nature, flow into each other by almost imperceptible gradations, and meeting like the confluent water of two seas, are scarcely distinguishable." It is easy to mystify the question, by citing facts which occur along the confines of the visible and invisible worlds, which it would be difficult to trace with any considerable certainty to their specific causes. Spiritualism, however, does not need these to make good its claims. It can afford to present the entire collection to Mr. Mahan, or to whomever else may be in want of them.

"The controlling agency of the will" must be a conscious voluntary operation; we have no knowledge of its being otherwise. When therefore at the *séance* a controlling will is exercised, which the consciousness of every one visibly present assures them is not put forward by themselves—and when the controlling will, not once only, but uniformly and everywhere, persistently claims to be that of some disembodied spirit, and often spontaneously furnishes evidence to make good its claim, what is the obvious, and one would think necessary inference—but that this claim is a valid one? Admit that the will of an embodied spirit, under suitable conditions, can exercise a certain control over the mind of another; is that power inherent in the body or in the spirit? If, as we suppose will be generally admitted, it is in the spirit, then we ask why, under similar conditions, may not a like control be exercised by a disembodied spirit? It is only when one mind is in a negative or passive state, that it is susceptible to the controlling agency of another, as every mesmeriser is fully aware. Now, one of the first conditions for spiritual manifestations is, that the mind of the medium, and of those forming the circle, should be in as passive a state as possible. The more completely all action of the will, all desire, all antagonism—all attempt at controlling or influencing the manifestations is absent, the more perfect in general are the manifestations, especially those where intelligence is more immediately and obviously apparent. It is admitted that there must be intelligent control somewhere; but if not from the mind of anyone

visibly present, whose is it?—whence comes it? The medium himself has no idea of what is about to happen through his mediumship. That it is not reflected from the mind of any one visibly present is known to all who have had any considerable experience in the matter, for their opinions are often contradicted, and facts foreign to their knowledge are communicated. At the first *séance* at which the writer first witnessed physical manifestations, the medium (who was about to emigrate) inquired how many days it would be before he left for Australia, and was answered by the movements of the table, thirty-one. “Well,” said he, “that would be strange, for I expect to go in about a week or ten days.” He went, however, on the thirty-first day. It may be said, this was only a curious coincidence; but the truth of the communication is not now the question; we ask whence came it? Not from the mind of self or friend (there were only three present, the medium included), for we knew nothing of the matter, and had no idea about it; nor from that of the medium, who was much surprised at receiving it. Whence then? Was his mind, or the table, or the *Od*, *en rapport* with the mind of some person who knew when the vessel would sail? The supposition is almost too absurd to need comment; but it may be remarked that the vessel should have sailed about the time the medium expected it, and its delay was occasioned by circumstances that had not then transpired, and therefore could not have been known, for facts cannot come out of the mind unless they are first in it. In Mr. Howitt’s letter to Mr. Forbes, he states that he was driven out of his Unitarian opinions by the spirits. Mr. Forbes in this instance attributes this, not to *Od*, but to the Holy Spirit; but this is only admitting spiritual agency in the highest degree, while denying it in its lower degrees.

Dodge it therefore as we may, the question always returns upon us, whence come those manifestations of intelligence and power foreign to our own personality? To attribute them to *Od* or to any imponderable unintelligent agent, is to ascribe the telegraphic message to the wire, and not to the man at the end of it. To say it comes from our own mind is a contradiction to our own consciousness. For we know that we did not before know what is often communicated; and we also know, some of us by experiment, that our wills are often powerless either to produce or prevent certain manifestations that we sometimes witness. No! Reason and analogy, as well as direct evidence show that the mind,—the will, is that of invisible, intelligent, disembodied beings outside ourselves, and who are frequently seen by mediums who had no knowledge of them in the natural world, and who so describe them that they are recognised by their friends and relatives.



But it is specially worthy of remark, that while sciolists speak of *Od* as if it were an unknown god, by whose power is wrought all wonders not otherwise explicable by their philosophy; those who are best acquainted with it, modestly disclaim for it all such wonder-working power. Reichenbach its discoverer, in a letter published on another page of this magazine, avowedly regards it as the mere natural foundation of Spiritualism, and declares that he has reluctantly abandoned his intention of carrying his inquiries forward into the spiritual department to which it leads, in consequence of the unpreparedness of the public mind in Germany, and the obstinate materialism of the scientific *savans*; while Dr. Ashburner, its principal champion in England, and whose statements are quoted by Mr. Forbes in support of his position, is, as must be known to the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine*, one of the most prominent advocates of Spiritualism in this country.

Mr. Forbes, as we have seen, would specially except the miracles of the Bible from the application of his theory. Other opponents of Spiritualism, however, make no such reservation. Dr. Richmond, for instance, as may be seen in his discussion with Professor Brittan, is a root-and-branch-man; he would sweep out the supernatural altogether. He has no more consideration for the prophets and apostles of Judea than for the mediums of America. He unsparingly applies the theory of the "*Od* force under the controlling power of the will" to explain the miracles of the Bible, as well as "The Phenomena known as Spiritual Manifestations." The attempt may seem audacious, but it is only a farther carrying out of those principles which the President of Cleveland College has avowed, and Mr. Forbes has unwittingly endorsed. If *Od* force can move a heavy table, why may it not have moved the stone from the door of the sepulchre? If Mr. Home is floated in the air by *Od* force, why may not the Apostle Philip have been carried from Gaza to Azotus by the same agent? If the "spirit-hand" seen by Robert Bell, Dr. Gully, and others, was only *Od* "under the controlling power of the will," why may not the spirit-hand that wrote on the walls of Belshazzar's palace have been constructed in the same way? Why should there be one theory for the dreams, visions, trances, and spirit-writings and drawings in Palestine, and another for them when they occur in England? If men and women now-a-days speak in unknown tongues under the inspiration of *Od*, what occasion to go beyond this "mundane agency" for the inspiration on the day of Pentecost? The parallel has been carried farther, but any balance that may stand over could be readily disposed of on the principles and in the language of Professor Asa Mahan, which we are sure Mr. Forbes will not knowingly endorse:—"Such facts manifestly lie in the track of

scientific discovery, and we must suppose them to be the result of mundane causes which are yet to be discovered, though at present unknown to us." "The Phenomena known as Spiritual Manifestations," though of more frequent occurrence now than formerly, probably because the conditions under which they are produced have been more generally recognised and experimented on, may, for the most part, be traced in universal history—the Bible history included; and you cannot apply a theory to the facts of the present, and long withhold its application to analogous facts in the past. That spirits, in their manifestations, may employ *Od*, or other imponderable agents, as a part of the necessary conditions, is not disputed; but, as wisely observed by the Rev. Charles Beecher, who on other grounds than those of Mr. Mahan, is opposed to these phenomena:—

Whatever physiological law accounts for odic phenomena in all ages, will in the end inevitably carry itself through the whole Bible, where it deals with the phenomena of soul and body as mutually related, acting and reacting. A large portion of the Bible, its prophecies, ecstasies, visions, trances, theophanies, and angelophanies, are more or less tinged with odic characteristics. The physiology, the anthropology of the Bible is highly odic, and must be studied as such. As such, it will be found to harmonize with the general principles of human experience in such matters in all ages. If a theory be adopted everywhere else but in the Bible, excluding spiritual intervention by odic channels *in toto*, and accounting for everything physically, then will the covers of the Bible prove but pasteboard barriers. Such a theory will sweep its way through the Bible, and its authority, its plenary inspiration will be annihilated. On the other hand, if the theory of spiritual intervention through odic channels be accepted in the Bible, it cannot be shut up there, but must sweep its way through the wide domain of "popular superstitions," as they are called, separating the element of truth on which those superstitions are based, and asserting its own authoritative supremacy.

We have allowed Mr. Forbes the benefit of confining his theory to the modern physical manifestations, which are the smallest and most unimportant part of the inquiry in which we are engaged. It would fare worse with him, were we to apply his theory to account for the higher spiritual phases on which his church and all others are based. His argument, even against the Baden Powells of the day, loses in logical force, when he stops so short of their diverging point, which is simply, that miracles are against the laws of nature. Let him push his argument as far as he will, all he does by his admission of these modern phenomena, is to enlarge somewhat the boundary of the laws of nature. There he weaves his cocoon, and wraps himself to sleep inside. It is the largest thing he sees to be possible, and miracles are left outside of it. They are still left outside of the boundary of nature, for all the race of Baden Powells to carp at and deny. It does not therefore seem to us, that to admit these manifestations of will through the *Od* force, will help us to any logical conclusion, so long as we cut off what are called miracles, from all connexion

with such phenomena. Perpetually we are reminded in this long controversy that the question is, whether or not the Spiritualism of the Bible is unique, or whether it is not rather embedded in the deepest soul of humanity. Again, this cerebration, or conscious or unconscious will, may be only another name for that interior spiritual contact of our souls with the spiritual world, from which, according to one theory, we derive our best impressions. The spiritual world *may* supply our wills unconsciously with the information and phenomena, which so sadly overburden the *Od* force.

We believe that Mr. Forbes has only very recently had his attention drawn to the subject, and certainly he has already made great progress in it in the present work, which is able and ingenuous, and at once rescues the subject from the shallow views of those who attribute the manifestations to that *bête noir*, the devil, or to evil spirits. He has at once chosen the ground where the best stand may be made, albeit, that ground, as we hope he will now see, is not tenable; and he has collected facts and arguments which render his book of 114 pages one of the best for intelligent inquirers to study.

We shall regret, however, if on further study, while the learned and well-intentioned author is parrying the thrusts of infidelity with one hand, he should continue at the same time to present to it a new and dangerous weapon with the other. Let him embrace the theory, as heartily as he has embraced the phenomena of spiritual manifestations, and he will find it a more powerful auxiliary in the cause of revealed truth than he at present has any idea of. We should, however, recall the word "theory," as distinguished from "phenomena," for the claim of a spiritual origin for the facts, is itself an important part of "the Phenomena known as spiritual manifestations." One thing the opponents of Spiritualism in England may learn from Professor Mahan. With all his hostility to Spiritualism, he is not so unwise as to deny its facts. He says, "In the present treatise, we shall *admit the facts claimed by Spiritualists*, and join issue with them simply and exclusively in regard to the conclusions which they deduce from them. WE ADMIT THE FACTS FOR THE ALL ADEQUATE REASON THAT AFTER CAREFUL INQUIRY WE HAVE BEEN LED TO CONCLUDE THAT THEY ARE REAL. WE THINK THAT NO CANDID INQUIRER, WHO CAREFULLY INVESTIGATES, CAN COME TO ANY OTHER CONCLUSION."

T. S.

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## SPIRITUALISM IN HOLLAND.

A CORRESPONDENT of the *Revue Spiritualiste*. Major Revius, gives an account of what he has witnessed at the Hague, since Mr. Home's visit to the Court there. He says that he was present at *séances* given by Mr. H., and relates the particulars of them. They are very similar to those with which the readers of the *Spiritual Magazine* are familiar. The Major says that it was found that his son had nearly the same gift as Mr. Home, and through him many similar manifestations were witnessed.

"After Mr. Home's departure from the Hague," Major Revius goes on to say, "my son attended many *séances* among our friends, and other mediums were developed. At one of these *séances*, at the house of a physician, the spirits of the late Mons. and Madame G. announced their presence. Mons. G. had possessed a considerable fortune, which he had bequeathed in a way disappointing to the expectations of the doctor and his family. After the doctor had expressed his feelings of dissatisfaction on this point, he asked what they wanted there? The answer was—'To seek a reconciliation with you.' 'Then you go, G.' said he, 'and let your wife speak; I never thought very well of you; let her tell me the reason of your leaving the property as you did.' 'You had enough,' was the answer, 'and so I persuaded my husband to dispose of it in favour of my own family, which needed it.' 'Ah! another proof of your selfishness,' said the doctor, 'of which you gave so many, that nobody regrets you, nor cares to remember you.' 'You mistake there,' was the reply: 'there is a poor widow, now living in ——— Street, who remembers me for acts of kindness.' 'Well,' the doctor said, 'we forgive everything; it's all over now.' Upon which the table pressed itself obliquely against the breast of the doctor, and others of his family who were sitting round it. After this the spirit gave no further sign. The communications in this *séance* were by the alphabet.

"The next day, two of the company, determining to enquire into the facts, found out the street so mentioned. It was a small one, inhabited by poor people. The gentlemen ultimately found a widow, who said that she had known Madame G., who had been dead so many years, for which she was sorry, as she had often received from her the tickets of a charity, by which she obtained bread, clothing, and fuel. She said that she lived in another street in the lady's lifetime.

"At a *séance* in my own house, two generals, my friends, were of the company: they wanted proof that they were not under any biological influence or hallucination. The table round

which we were seated was strong, and weighed a hundred and ten pounds. At my request, the spirits raised the table free from the ground, and let it fall in such a way as to break the pediment. The gentlemen came the next day, to see if the table was *actually broken, as it appeared to be* the night before;—for my part, I had still further evidence of it in the cabinet maker's bill.

"The large table being thus broken, we moved to a smaller one. General M. V. asked if this lighter table could turn itself upside down? The table replied by the alphabet—'Turn upside down yourself.' To the General's question, 'Did you ever know me?' the answer was—'Yes, at Bergen-op-Zoom, forty years ago, when you were a subaltern.' The General said this was according to fact. At my request, the spirit or spirits made this little table feel so heavy, that we could not raise it by our united efforts, and then so light that we could lift it with the little fingers." . . . . .

"We have a medium here, a little girl of ten years of age. On a recent occasion, at a *séance* where this medium was taken, the spirit of the hostess's brother announced his presence. This brother was captain of a merchant vessel, which had not been heard of since the 10th of October, 1854. Through the young medium's hand it was written that his ship was 'wrecked on the English coast, on the 14th of October, 1854, and all on board perished.' The lady asked as a proof that he would write his name by the hand of this child-medium. The lady was a perfect stranger to the medium. After some letters were begun and as often rubbed out, the signature of the captain was written, perfectly corresponding to signatures in letters from him, and which she had carefully preserved.

"A few months ago, my wife, myself, and son were passing the evening at a friend's, several young people there proposed to amuse themselves at turning the table. They went into an adjoining room and soon returned with the news that they had turned a work-table, and now proposed to try their hands at the large one in the *salon*. Observing twitchings of the hand in one of the young ladies, I got pencil and paper and proposed that she should hold the pencil as if to write. After some objections, she took the pencil, and at the instant of holding it as if to write, fell into the magnetic sleep, and thus wrote with closed eyes four full pages, in which a spirit expressed its happiness at being able by this means to assure his protégée that he was always watching over her. That the young lady was in the magnetic sleep I assured myself, by holding a sheet of paper between her face and the pencil, which did not prevent the lines from being straight and equidistant; the letters were large and like those of a person not in the habit of writing. It was subsequently found

that the signature to this singular writing was that of an ancestor of the medium on the mother's side, a Professor of the University of Groningen, two centuries ago.

Major Revius's letter contains much more, but the facts related shew that the manifestations of spirit-power in Holland are of the same character as here.

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### AN HOUR WITH THE DEAD.

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IN silence of the starry night  
 The long lost came once more !  
 But came not with the soulless look  
 Her coffin'd image wore.  
 For Life and Love were in her eyes—  
 Their warmth upon her cheek ;  
 And in the sweet familiar tones,  
 Her lips a greeting speak !

Again her face to me is press'd  
 In all its girlish charms,  
 And pent-up cares of troubled years  
 Are wept within her arms ;  
 And yet it seemeth as we talk,  
 The " old times " come not near ;  
 But we have met, as meet we should,  
 Could she indeed be here.

And how those parted hours have pass'd,  
 I tell with strange relief ;  
 And hear her gentle words console,  
 Yet chide, such useless grief.  
 Half sad, half glad, that weary days,  
 Which I must know again,  
 Her whisper'd " Hope ! have Faith ! and Love ! "  
 Shall wile of half their pain !

I wake, to watch across my couch  
 The moon-rays faintly gleam,  
 And ask my soul,—Can this indeed  
 Be nothing more than *dream* ?  
 Or comes some pitying spirit by,  
 Who, watching " them that weep,"  
 Speaks, in the soft tones of the loved,  
 Sweet soothings while we sleep !

LOUISA CROW.

## SPIRITUAL COMMUNION.

IN a work, by the Rev. A. Peabody, entitled *Sermons designed to furnish Comfort and Strength to the Afflicted*, there occur the following observations:—

“An old English divine, speaking of the communion of the dead with the living, says:—‘Little know we, how little a way a soul hath to go to heaven, when it departs from the body. Whether it must pass locally through moon, and sun, and firmament, or whether that soul finds light in the same room, and be not carried into any other, but that the glory of heaven be diffused over all, I know not, I dispute not, I enquire not.

“ ‘Without disputing or enquiry, I know, that, when Christ says that God is not the God of the dead, he says that to assure me that those whom I call dead are alive. If the dead and we be not on one floor, nor under one storey, yet we are under one roof. We think not a friend lost, because he is gone into another room, nor because he is gone into another land, and into another world, no man is gone; for that heaven which God created, and this world is all one world. If I had fixed a son in court, or married my daughter into a plentiful fortune, I were satisfied for that son and daughter. Shall I not be so, when the King of Heaven hath taken that son to himself, and married himself to that daughter for ever? This is the faith that sustains me, when I lose by the death of others, or suffer by living in misery myself, that the dead and we are all now in one church, and at the resurrection shall all be in one choir.’

“The dead cannot be far from the living, nor can they cease to love them. Separated from us but by a thin veil, to them transparent, and almost so to our faith, they are the cloud of witnesses that compass us about, survey our path, and rejoice in our progress. Let us feel that they are with us in prayer and praise, in duty and devotion. Let the thought of their watchful love give us at once comfort and strength,—comfort for their departure, —strength that we may follow them.”

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The Queen Dowager tells me that the late King George III. used often to mention a story which was traditional in his family. This was, that George I., not long before his last voyage to Hanover, where he died, dreamed that his deceased wife, the unfortunate Princess of Zell, came to meet him dressed in green. He was alarmed at this dream, but fell asleep, and dreamed it a second time. He then made a knot in his handkerchief, and prayed that if it were meant as a warning he might find the knot untied in the morning; which, as the story goes, he did. He therefore told the Duchess of Kendall, his favourite, that if she had anything to ask of him she had better make haste, for he did not think he should live long.—From *Miss C. Knight's Autobiography*.

## Correspondence.

THE following letter having been placed in our hands by the gentleman to whom it was addressed, we conceive no complaint will be made by the writer at finding his opinions in print. There is a point in his opening remarks, which we strongly recognize, and have no quarrel with him because he wishes to leave to others the hard work of the hewers of wood and drawers of water. No doubt his usefulness lies in some other division of the army of martyrs, which comprises in its ranks all the various grades and positions necessary to make it a perfect organization. We think, however, that in his concluding disclaimer of coming out in the same pages as "Mr. Home's fantastic spirits," he is scarcely so wise as at the beginning of his letter. In the first place, in the present position of contending theories on the origin and cause of these manifestations, it may be that they proceed hot from the devil, or, as Mr. Dickens and others of equal wisdom affirm, they may be nothing but the grossest fraud on the part of the mediums, and delusion on the part of ourselves, or it may be that the opinion of the Rev. Mr. Granville Forbes, on which we have commented in another article, is the correct one, and consequently that Mr. Home's manifestations are not through spiritual agency at all, but from some wondrous undiscovered force of the brain or mind; or, it may be that they proceed from some general spiritual power, of a nature yet to be discovered; or, it may be that they proceed from individual spirits, who may or may not be fantastic, but who, whether they are so or not, are our brothers. Till this great question which so puzzles the learned theories of Mr. Forbes, Sir Benjamin Brodie, and the whole bench of Bishops, is settled, we shall bespeak for the fantastic spirits very respectful treatment. Besides, it is hardly charitable, if they be fantastic and rather ragged in their manners, to treat them worse than our poor earthly boys in the ragged schools, who are the objects of such noble sacrifices of time and labour from many of our best and highest born men and women. It was said long ago, by one termed a pagan by certain of our friends, "*nihil humani a me alienum puto*," and in a Divine page we have been warned against calling things common and unclean. All honor then to those who are willing to try to do good, even through, and it may be to, fantastic spirits, and who are not too proud to be pioneers for the gentlemen who will come and settle in the land when they have cleared it.—[ED.]

"—, Devon, 29th Sept., 1861.

"DEAR SIR,—I agree with you in your estimate of the American mind: they are the pioneers of discovery and con-



quest in the spirit-world, and thereby, in the spiritual. There is a vast deal of dross amongst them, but in this dross there is some fine gold, and where this comes from, more will be found. The first squatters in the far west were mostly a lawless set, men fleeing from the restraints of civilization; but they subdued wild nature, and savage natives, and opened the way for this civilization which they ran from, and which has now established its dominion across the whole Continent. It appears to me that these Spiritualists are like those squatters, runaways from the restraints of intellectual law and order; but serving as pioneers for the establishment of the glorious law of liberty which follows at their heels. I will not be one of them, but I will watch their progress with interest; indeed, I will follow after them as quickly as I can, and settle amongst them, as soon as they will have me with my companions, law and order, though this will not be till they have reached the bounds of their continent, and can go no farther.

"You think my 'autobiography' might be 'published with profit in the *Spiritual Magazine*.' With every desire to do anything that may be profitable, I have been unable to discover how or wherein this profit would be. If you could shew me wherein my story would be good or useful in print—but even then, it would not be at all pleasant to come out in company with Mr. Home's fantastic spirits in the Magazine.

"I remain, dear sir, yours most sincerely."

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*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

DEAR SIR,—I observe in a new vol. (*Maunsell's Poems*, Smith & Elder, Cornhill, London), an account of tidings, gained by clairvoyance, of the steamer "President," missing for some years. A very dear friend of mine sailed in that vessel, and if any of your readers would kindly inform me, through your Magazine, whether they are aware of any *séance* that took place when the ship was first missing, either in this country or America, and if so, whether Maunsell's account of it be authentic, they would deeply oblige yours very sincerely,

Pall Mall, London.

JAMES SMITHSON.

Sept. 6th, 1861.

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*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

SIR,—At a *séance* I recently attended, at the rooms of Madame Besson, (who was the medium on the occasion) at No. 18, Theobald's-road, the following, among other phenomena, occurred:—

1st.—A square table was repeatedly raised horizontally off the floor, the hands of all present being raised above, but none on it; it also swayed and undulated in space, without any visible support, and about six inches off the floor.

2nd.—Loud raps were heard on the floor and on different parts of the table, while the hands of all present were resting on it; and mental as well as oral questions were answered by the raps.

3rd.—The illness and death-scene of my sister—a lady utterly unknown to the medium—was represented with exact fidelity.

4th.—Luminous phenomena in the form of stars were seen in various parts of the room.

5th.—A book lying on the mantel-shelf, about three feet distant from the company was, without visible agency, removed, and thrown upon the floor, and on asking if this could be repeated, two other books on the shelf, before our eyes, were taken up and thrown to the floor.

6th.—The sound of a bell in the room was distinctly heard, although no bell or any instrument by which such a sound could be naturally produced was in the room. On asking if it could be repeated, it was heard again, I should think, twenty times. It sounded successively in various parts of the room; all heard it quite as distinct as though made by a small hand-bell.

I should remark that the room was light, the hands, faces, and movements of all present, as well as everything in the room, were distinctly visible. The *séance* was opened with prayer, and reading a portion of Scripture; and although when the *séance* began, all present were not believers, yet the utmost harmony prevailed, and the genuineness of the phenomena was admitted by all. There were eight persons present. I have simply stated the most salient features of the *séance*, omitting many incidents that were of interest. I leave them to your readers without comment.

Yours, &c.,

August 28th.

T. S.

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*To the Editor of the "Spiritual Magazine."*

"We read in the *Gegenwart of Vienna* that a Catholic Priest was preaching before his congregation last Sunday in the Church of St. Mary, at Vienna, on the subject of the constant protection of angels over the faithful committed to their charge, and this in words of great exaltation, and with an unction and eloquence which touched profoundly the hearts of numbers of the female part of the congregation. Soon after the commencement of the sermon, a girl of about twenty years of age shewed all the signs of ecstasy, and soon, her arms crossed upon her bosom, or raised upwards, and with her eyes fixed on the preacher, she was seen by the whole congregation to be raised gradually from the floor into the air, and there to rest at an elevation, of more than a foot, to the end of the sermon. We are assured that the same phenomenon had happened several days previously at the moment of her receiving the communion."—*Journal de Frankfort*, Sept. 6. 1861.

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SIR,—According to directions in the Magazine I address this to you, to insert it or not, as you think best. It has come from afar, and the Frankfort paper is a most respectable one. I wonder it was allowed to be made known in Vienna, as the priests there are great enemies to Spiritualism. At Munich, the archbishop commanded the suppression of two circles, and he was of course obeyed. This is a confirmation of my friend Mr. Home's repeated elevation, of which there are a thousand witnesses. I possess eight engravings from different copper-plates of a similiar elevation of Pope Pius VII. There is this inscription:

"*Pius Sept. Pont. Maz.*

*Savonne in Ecstasim iterum raptus die Assumptionis B. V. M.*

15th Augusti, 1811."

I have two ancient prints of different risings in the air of St. Catherine of Siena, one inscription is:

"*Sublime per echstasim rapta divina arcana contemplatur,*" &c.

I have had much experience in the last seven years, which has led me to collect the records of others, ancient and modern. I am waiting in hopes that Mr. Howitt will remember his promise, and send you some spiritual notices of Ariosto, &c. I have found some relating to other distinguished persons, singularly authenticated, which you shall have afterwards if you wish. I believe many of your friends know

Your obedient Servant.

Florence, 15 October, 1861.

SEYMOUR KIRKUP.